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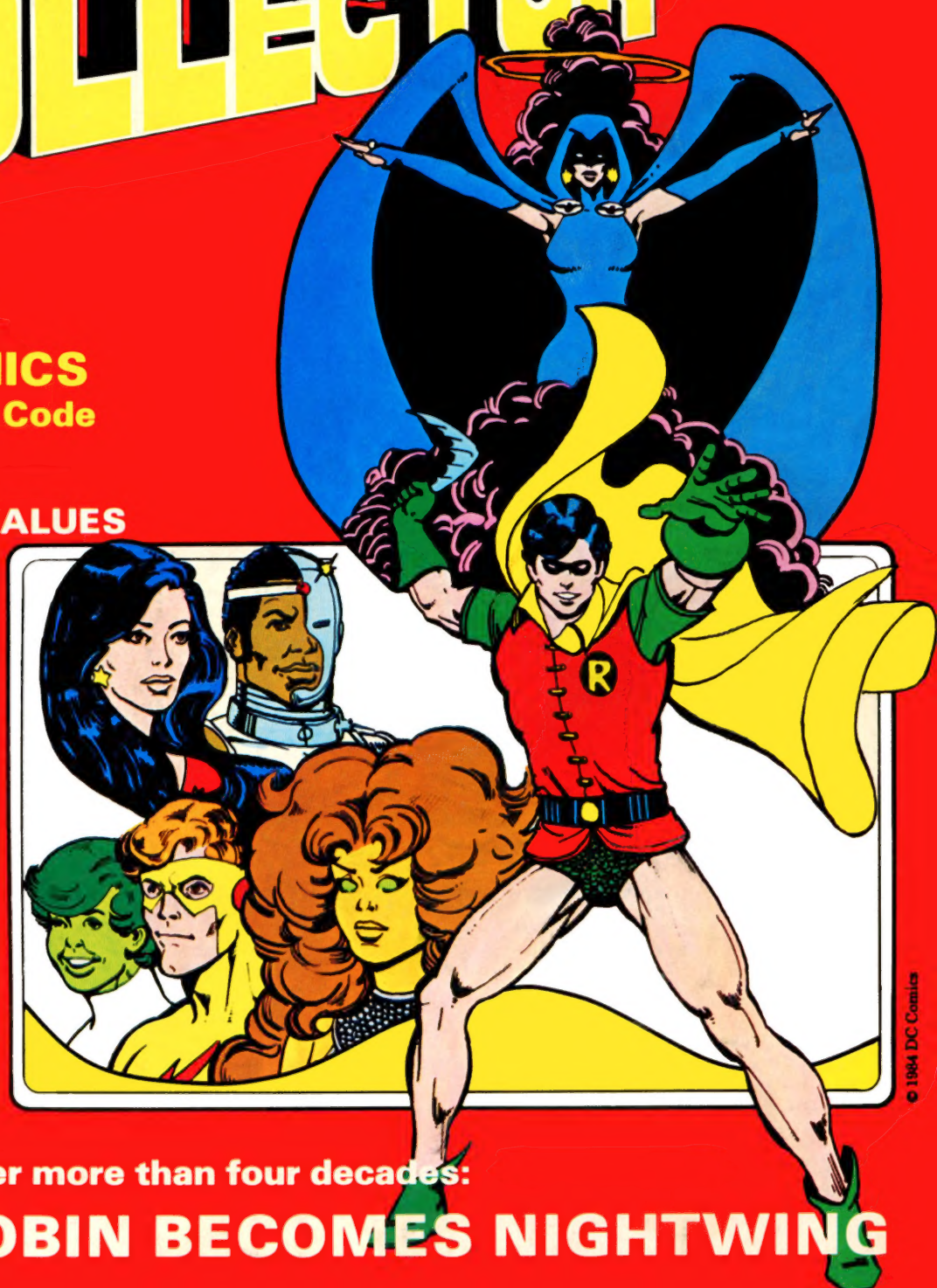

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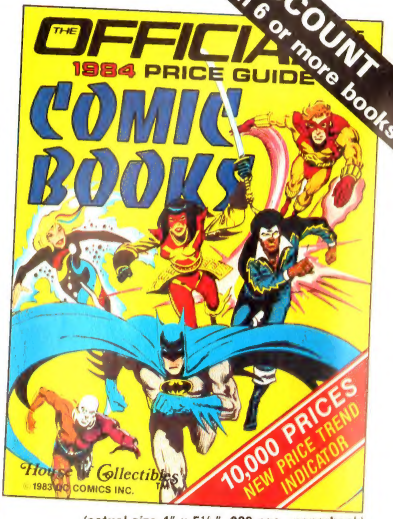

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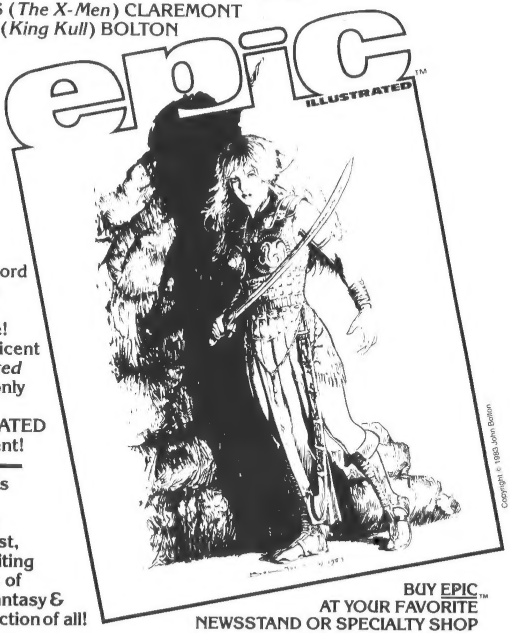

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Editorial

As you can see, ***Comics Collector*** is now being published on a quarterly schedule. You can make plans right now to buy our next issue; it should be on your newsstands on April 17.

Some readers have asked why (though ***Comics Collector*** does bring you occasional fresh looks at comics — like this issue's color previews of DC's Nightwing) there isn't more news covered in ***CC***.

The reason is simple; ***CC*** is a quarterly.

We've handled comics news, off and on, for a couple of decades — and we're here to tell you that quarterlies are great for feature articles but not the best way to bring hot news to comics fans.

If you *want* news of comic books and comic strips and their creators, you need a weekly. Just send us a postcard with your name and address (***Comics Buyer's Guide***, 700 E. State St., Iola, WI 54990), and we'll be glad to send you a sample copy of our comics weekly — no strings attached. (When you decide to subscribe, you'll find that the weekly — ***The Comics Buyer's Guide*** — costs less than a single comic book for each issue. ***CBG***'s issues often have twice as many pages as a regular comic, and those pages are twice as big.)

That's why ***CC*** doesn't have more news.

***

Once again, we'd like to thank Robert M. Overstreet for permitting us to use facts and figures from *The Comic Book Price Guide* #13 in our feature "The Cost of Collecting." In several cases, we have condensed the material for easier use. For full entries — as well as facts and figures on thousands of *other* comics — we recommend you buy a copy from Overstreet Publications, Inc., 780 Hunt Cliff Drive N.W., Cleveland, Tenn. 37311. (By the way, it is also possible to buy updates of the *Guide*, and #14 is now being readied.)

***

Occasionally, we get mail from people who complain that some aspect of comic art doesn't appeal to them. "Why did you run an article on *Little Lulu*?" they ask. "I never read it, and it doesn't interest me."

Or "I'm tired of seeing articles about current super-heroes. I don't want to read about them."

Or "Why run articles about comic strips? My local paper doesn't carry the one you covered in *CC*."

We've been collecting comic books and strips since the Forties. We've found *something* of interest in the field of comics in every single year since we began reading them.

We think a possible reason for our continuing interest is that we've been willing to look at *everything* the field has to offer — and it has a *lot* to offer. If our interests had been so narrow that we refused to look at a fresh approach, we'd have left the field long ago.

What ***Comics Collector*** deals with is an *art form* — a highly enjoyable art form. To say that it is only of interest when it is by this particular artist or on that particular subject is to dismiss its potential and to lose the excitement and pleasure it offers.

We suggest that, when you find an article on something you're *not* familiar with, you read it all the more carefully. You may get hooked on a whole new area of entertainment.

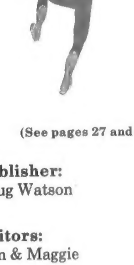
We still remember the first time we came across the *Mr. Oswald* strip — which has run for years in a hardware-retailer's magazine. It is a classic of strip construction, scripting, and humor — yet it is still unknown to many comics fans, because few of them have had access to it. Want to hear more?

Maintain your enthusiasms. You're in a delightful world.

Don + Maggie

COMICS COLLECTOR

Who is this?



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(See pages 27 and 43.)

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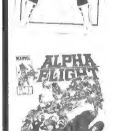

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Letters

Wallace I. Green
Executive Editor, Periodicals
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Many thanks for the copy of ***Comics Collector*** #2. I was especially delighted to find an article on *Little Lulu* prominently featured. I am constantly being reminded of the warm memories adults have of the *Little Lulu* comic books they read in the Fifties. Despite the fact that she is a great character for girls to relate to, she was a big favorite with boys as well.

I didn't have a chance yet to read the whole issue, but I did give a quick skimming to *The Lone Ranger*. You must realize this by now, but when you come to the end of page 38, the article breaks off abruptly in mid-sentence. It took me a while, but I finally tracked it down on page 64. As an editor, I've had similar things happen to me from time to time and I understand the embarrassment when you realize you've committed that kind of goof.

If there's need for yet one more magazine to serve comic fans and collectors, this looks like a good one.

Berke Breathed

Looks great! Darned spiffy magazine, I'd say. Opus concurs. I think you both should be proud.

And the interview with moi actually made the subject sound literate . . . indeed an accomplishment considering similar projects which now clutter my scrapbook. Please pass my kudos on to John Sayers.

Again . . . good job and good luck.

Carl Labbe
P.O. Box 6042
Phoenix, Ariz. 85005

I am in the middle of reading an excellent second issue of ***Comics Collector***. You'll probably get a lot of letters bemoaning the "excess" of X-Men material, but I think (as you must) that there is enough interest in this superior serial to warrant extra attention. The article on The Lone Ranger was an excellent chronology of the masked legend, and the EC history was great (liked the pricing info too). *Bloom County* is always fun and I enjoyed the interview. Little Lulu I may get to later, as well as the MLJ Story. The price guide should be continued, since it provides much useful info.

Overall, a magazine well worth the price of a subscription. The "Cost of Collecting" feature is a great idea — keep it. Personally, I would like to see some "business trends" type articles, tracing a particular title or genre through its supply-and-demand curves. How about articles about individual authors or artists which include their bibliographies? And let's see more about comics/movie tie-ins, including those made-for-TV.

[This seems a good place to mention that readers who possess expert knowledge on comics should feel free to submit articles for ***Comics Collector****. Those articles don't just materialize out of the air, you know; they have to be written. We are always interested in seeing manuscripts from the collectors who are the true experts on comics.]*

James W. Bogart, Jr.
1115 First St. N.
Newton, Iowa 50208

I was surprised to learn recently that the comics industry is experiencing a shortage of talent and some are seeking widely for new blood. This revelation comes almost concurrently with the one that people all over the nation are working actively in the field.

This is an enlightening surprise, believe me. For many years now, I have believed (apparently naively) that one had to live in New York and environs in order to entertain any hope of working in the field. I had always thought the comics industry worked in a manner akin to the movie business, centered as it is on Southern California.

Since I'm in no position to move East, dreams of working in comics died aborning long ago.

Now, they've been reawakened, I'm glad to say. However, in my ignorance, I face a problem I hadn't thought of originally. It's a problem I imagine many would-be artists and writers would face in my position, and, therefore, I suspect it is a problem that you might be uniquely situated to solve.

I face an information gap — or perhaps I should say chasm. There are so many questions, I hardly know where to begin. They are, undoubtedly, not exactly original questions, but they are, one and all, questions that I'm sure any aspiring talents would ask, and I can't remember having read the answers to any of them anywhere.

I assume career opportunities are the ultimate goal of most who would like to get into the business; it is certainly mine. I am well aware of what the work is like — and am equally aware of the personal rewards in having created something, having breathed life into blank paper or canvas.

Right about there, though, you leave the world of fine art and enter the world of business. And that's where my questions begin.

I see that the standard comic book has shrunk some, since I was an avid collector. My elder son is just now blossoming into a fan at the ripe old age of 11, so I'm now finding many examples of the current state of the art underfoot these days.

I must admit the, uh, variety of content has certainly broadened since the "good old days" of the strict Comics Code, but that isn't necessarily a bad thing. A more serious adult treatment of comics could blossom into a whole new era for the field, if treated right. In any case, there are certainly plenty of areas to generate excitement and enthusiasm. The mind boggles at the possibilities.

But even Noah needed a blueprint to build the Ark. Enthusiasm alone cannot take the place of a good grasp of the nuts and bolts of the business.

So to my questions:

(1) **Original art size:** For practice, I've taken measurements of art size on some of the modern comics and then doubled that to draw original pages as samples — thus yielding (when reduced to comics-page size) a reduction of 50%. This seems to work fairly well, but for proper comparison it would be better to know what size professional original art pages are, if such things are standardized at all.

Beyond this, I have a pretty thorough background in the fundamentals, so I don't really have any more questions along this line, though I realize that there might be many more equally valid areas of inquiry that a general article on the subject might pursue.

(2) **Mailing addresses:** A list of the various publishers, their addresses, how to submit material to meet their criteria, and a general synopsis of the types of material each publisher favors would be a great boon to me. Since I hardly consider myself unique, it would likely be invaluable to many others as well.

This alone would probably be the single most important contribution you could make to prospective professionals — simply because it would ease new talent's entrance into the field.

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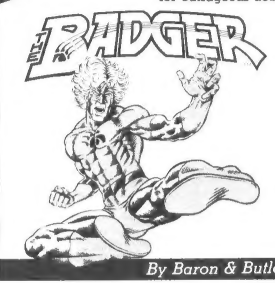

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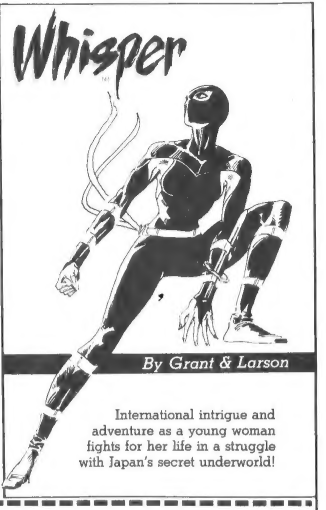

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(3) **Generating enthusiasm:** Jim Shooter in his "Shooter's Page," states that "a creative person . . . working full time earns an outstanding income and enjoys excellent benefits." Such a statement is all well and good, but I for one find myself asking just what constitutes "outstanding" and "excellent."

Don't misunderstand me. I'm not interested in how much Joe Blow made in income last year. I wasn't even interested in perusing the President's income tax statement last year, even though the newspapers thought it newsworthy. I don't possess that sort of curiosity.

But I would like some idea of wat a newscomer in the field might expect as a return for his efforts. I realize different setups most likely pay differently. But what *do* they pay? A few anonymous examples might prove very enlightening. Anyone considering a major career move would like some idea of what he was letting himself in for ahead of time. He would, anyway, if he had a lick of common sense.

If the returns are as outstanding as Mr. Shooter intimated, then I would think someone should be advertising that fact in detail. That, alone, would be a good selling point to attract new talent.

(4) **Exploring alternatives:** For someone like me, doing the whole package (story, drawing, lettering, layout, the works) is where it's at. There is something very special in creating your own story, a personal rush that's hard to describe. Though working in one particular discipline on a group effort certainly has rewards of its own, I am still attracted to doing the entire production.

I can see, though, where it would probably be easier to sell your talent in a particular area than to get someone to buy a package that he had no prior part in. After all, it might not read like the thousand other things already published, and heaven help anything truly original. As I recall, that was the problem facing Richard and Wendy Pini when they first tried to sell *Elfquest*.

What alternatives does a newcomer have? What risks and rewards does each alternative contain? Perhaps personal examples of the decisions taken by recent entrants into the field and the consequent results might be in order here.

To me, attracting talent to the field is akin to selling. In this case, you are selling comics careers. The best sales technique that I know is to make your customer comfortable with the product by making him thoroughly familiar with it. If he knows what it's all about, if he feels he understands it (its strengths and its weaknesses), and if he is convinced the strengths far outweigh the weaknesses, then he is more likely to buy it. More likely than if he's just given

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vague, rosy-colored hype to consider.

*[**Comics Collector** offers to pass questions its readers may have about comic books and strips on to the professionals in the industry. If you have a specific question to ask Marv Wolfman, Roy Thomas, Jim Shooter, John Byrne, or Milton Caniff, we'll try to get the answer for you.*

To get the answer to some of your questions, we called Marvel Comics. (Remember that the answers will vary slightly from company to company. Not all companies demand a consistent size for the artist's original art, for example. But you can get an impression of the industry from the answers we got.)

At Marvel, original art is 1.5 times the size you see in the printed comic book. The paper is 11" x 17" — but the artist would, of course, leave a margin on a sheet that size.

Jim Shooter's Administrative Assistant, Lynn Cohen, told us ***beginner's rates*** *at Marvel are as follows:*

- *$10 per page for plot*
- *$20 per page for script*
- *$50 per page for pencils*
- *$35 per page for inks*
- *$9 per page for lettering*
- *$9 per page for coloring*

The "page" cited is a ***printed page****. Inks over breakdowns will bring $20 per page more than inks. Breakdowns alone will bring $20 per page less than pencils.*

For a clear view of what is required in each step of the creative process involved in comic-book production, you should buy a copy of ***The Marvel Try-out Book****, which should be available by the time you read this. Designed as an educational project, "It will be a big, heavy book selling for $12.95 and it should illustrate all aspects of creating a Marvel comic book," said Marvel's Direct Sales Manager Carol Kalish.*

"It will provide much, much more on-hand guidance than we've been able to give in the past."]

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SILVER SURFER (NEW): #1 ..... 1.50
SMURFS: #1, 2, 3 ea ..... .45
SPECTACULAR SPIDERMAN: #1 $2.00, #18-20, 21, 24-26, 29-40, 56 60¢ ea, #22 $2 50, #27 & 28 $12.50 ea, #55, 57, 65-67, 68, 71-74 50¢ ea, #58 75¢ ea, #75 75¢, #77 up ..... .45
ANNUAL: #1, 3 ea ..... .60
SPIDER-WOMAN: #1-18 50¢ ea, #37, 38 $1.25, #43-47 45¢ ea, #48, 49 ..... .45
STAR WARS: #1 $6.00, #2-10 $1.50, #11-16 $1.00, #17-19 $2.00, #20-30, $1.00, #33-37 75¢, #38 $2.00, #40-44 $1.25 ea, #45-49, 51-56 60¢ ea, #50 75¢, #57-68 50¢, #69 up ..... .45
ANNUAL: #2 75
TEAM AMERICA: #1-11 ea 45¢, #12 ..... .75
THOR: #227, 246, 247, 250, 272-291, 328-336 45¢, #337 ..... 8.00
ANNUAL: #10 ..... .50
TIME BANDITS: #1 ..... .65
VISION SCARLET WITCH: #1-4 ea ..... .45
WARLOCK (Reprints): #4 up ..... .50
WHAT IF: #4 $1.00, #8-10, 12, 15, 16 75¢ ea, #27 $2.00, #28 $3.00, #31-34 $1.00, #35, 37 up ea ..... .75
WOLVERINE: #2, 3, 4 ..... .60
X-MEN: #141, 142 $2.00, #143-149 $1.25, #150 $1.00, #151-164 75¢ ea, #165 $2.00, #166 $1 25, #167 & 168 60¢, #169 & up ..... .45
ANNUAL: #3, 4 $3.00 ea, #5 $1.50, #6 ..1.00
X-MEN/NEW TEEN TITANS: #1 ..... 2.00

DC SPECIALS

EMMELOT 3000: #1 ..... 5.00
#2-5 ..... 3.50
#6-9 ..... 1.50
OMEGA MEN: #1 ..... 2.00
#2-5 ..... 1.75
#6-9 ..... 1.00
#10 up 1.25
TALES NEW TEEN TITANS: #1 ..... 1.00
#2, 3, 4 ..... .75
NEW TEEN TITANS: #1 ..... 20.00
#9, 10 ..... 4.00
#14-21 ..... 2.00
#22-31 ..... 1.50
#32-37 up ..... .75
Annual #2 ..... 1.50

Convention Calendar

GREAT LAKES

STATES IN REGION: Ill., Ind., Ky., Mich., Ohio and Wis.

CHICAGO, ILL. – Jan. 12 – Chicago Minicon, (C), Americana-Congress Hotel, 520 S. Michigan Ave., A: N/A, Chicago Comicon, 1219 Devon, Chicago, IL 60660. PH: 312-274-1832 or Minicon Hotline PH: 312-743-4493

OSHKOSH, WIS. – Jan. 13-15 – Collectors Show (C, Cd, M, R), Park Plaza, Downtown, Fri. 9:30 a.m.-9 p.m., Sat. 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m., Sun. Noon-5 p.m., A: free. Ron Spandauer, Box 1004, Oshkosh, WI 54901. PH: 414-233-0982 (after 3)

CLEVELAND, OHIO – Jan. 14 – Saturday's Child Comics-Nostalgiafest Show (C), The Somerset Inn, Jct. 8, 422 & 43, 11 a.m.-6 p.m., A: $1.50. Joe Tricarichi, 2520 Ashurst, Cleveland, OH 44118. PH: 216-932-8596

MADISON, WIS. – Jan. 14-15 – Record, Comic & Trading Card Collectors Show & Sale (C, Cd, R), West Towne Mall, West Towne Mall, Gammon & Mineral Point Rds., Sat. 10 a.m.-9:30 p.m.; Sun. Noon-5 p.m., A: free, 6 $40 Dennis Cerny, PH: 608-833-1544 (8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.)

ROYAL OAK, MICH. – Jan. 15 – Comic Book & Baseball Card Show (C, Cd), American Legion Hall, 1815 Rochester Rd., 10 a.m.-5 p.m., A: N/A, Michael Lester, 16232 Carriage Lamp Court, Apt. 929, Southfield, MI 48075. PH: 313-557-8235

CHICAGO HEIGHTS, ILL. – Jan. 22 – Collectors Convention (C, Cd), Elmhurst Comic Book, 620 S. Halsted, A: 50¢, Ken Zajkowski, 14626 Memorial, Dolton, IL 60419. PH: 312-849-1521 or 312-862-9798.

PLYMOUTH, MICH. – Jan. 27-29 – Genuine Confusion (Sf), Plymouth Hilton, 14707 Northville Rd., A: $10 until Nov. 24, $12 until Jan. 15, $15 after. Nancy Tucker, PH: 313-485-4824

ELMHURST, ILL. – Jan. 29 – Elmhurst Comic Book & Baseball Card Show (C, Cd), American Legion, 210 W. Butterfield, A: $1. Graham Crackers Cards & Comics, 214 S. Washington, Naperville, IL 60540. PH: 355-4310 or 968-5250

CHICAGO, ILL. – Feb. 17-19 – Capricon IV (Sf), Hotel Continental, 505 N. Michigan Ave., A: $10 until Feb. 1, $15 after. Capricon IV, PO Box 1295, Oak Park, IL 60304

MADISON, WIS. – Feb. 24-26 – WisCon 8 (C, M, SF), Concourse Hotel, A: $11 until Feb. 1, $16 at door. Peter Theron, Box 1624, Madison, WI 53701. PH: 608-251-6226 days and 233-0326 evenings

CHICAGO HEIGHTS, ILL. – Feb. 26 – Collectors Convention (C, Cd), Banquet Hall, 620 S. Halsted, A: 50¢, Ken Zajkowski, 14626 Memorial, Dolton, IL 60419. PH: 312-849-1521 or 312-862-9798.

ELMHURST, ILL. – Feb. 26 – Elmhurst Comic Book & Baseball Card Show (C, Cd), American Legion, 210 W. Butterfield, A: $1. Graham Crackers Cards & Comics, 214 S. Washington, Naperville, IL 60540. PH: 355-4310 or 968-5250

PARK CITY, KY. – March 2-4 – Uppersouthclave XIV & Concave Five (Sf), Park Mammoth Resort, I-65 exit 48, A: $7 until Feb. 14, $9 after. Concave, PO Box 116, Park City, KY 42160

CHICAGO, ILL. – March 4 – Chicago Minicon, (C), Americana-Congress Hotel, 520 S. Michigan Ave., A: N/A, Chicago Comicon, 1219 Devon, Chicago, IL 60660. PH: 312-274-1832 or Minicon Hotline PH: 312-743-4493

CLEVELAND, OHIO – March 10 – Saturday's Child Comics-Nostalgiafest Show (C), The Somerset Inn, Jct. 8, 422 & 43, 11 a.m.-6 p.m., A: $1.50. Joe Tricarichi, 2520 Ashurst, Cleveland, OH 44118. PH: 216-932-8596

CINCINNATI, OHIO – March 24-25 – Starship Cincinnati 2 (C, ST), Sheraton Springdale, 11911 Sheraton Ln., A: $25 until Jan. 1, J. Baker, 49 Grant St., Ft. Thomas, KY 41075, PH: 606-441-3379

CHICAGO HEIGHTS, ILL. – March 25 – Collectors Convention (C, Cd), Banquet Hall, 620 S. Halsted, A: 50¢, Ken Zajkowski, 14626 Memorial, Dolton, IL 60419. PH: 312-849-1521 or 312-862-9798.

VILLA PARK, ILL. – March 25 – Relax-A-Con XXI (C, Cd, SF, M), Odeum, 1033 N. Villa, A: $1. B J Comic Corner, 260 N. Ardmore, Villa Park, IL 60181. PH: 312-834-0383

CHICAGO, ILL. – April 8 – Chicago Minicon, (C), Americana-Congress Hotel, 520 S. Michigan Ave., A: N/A, Chicago Comicon, 1219 Devon, Chicago, IL 60660. PH: 312-274-1832 or Minicon Hotline PH: 312-743-4493

CLEVELAND, OHIO – April 20-22 – Stellar Voyage 84 (Sf, M), Quality Court Hotel, 777 St. Clair Ave., A: $20 until Oct. 31, $25 until Jan. 31, $30 until March 31, $40 after. Stellar Voyage, PO Box 99956, Eneview Station, Cleveland, OH 44199

ELMHURST, ILL. – May 6 – Elmhurst Comic Book & Baseball Card Show (C, Cd), American Legion, 210 W. Butterfield, A: $1. Graham Crackers Cards & Comics, 214 S. Washington, Naperville, IL 60540. PH: 355-4310 or 968-5250

COLUMBUS, OHIO – May 18-20 – Marcon (Sf, M), Quality Inn, 6900 Sinclair Rd., I-71 at Morse Rd., A: $12.50 until April 15, $15 until May 18. Marcon, PO Box 14780, Columbus, OH 43212

CLEVELAND, OHIO – May 19 – Saturday's Child Comics-Nostalgiafest Show (C), The Somerset Inn, Jct. 8, 422 & 43, 11 a.m.-6 p.m., A: $1.50. Joe Tricarichi, 2520 Ashurst, Cleveland, OH 44118. PH: 216-932-8596

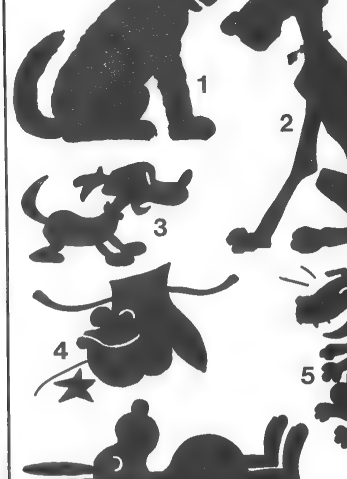
CHICAGO, ILL. – May 20 – Chicago Minicon, (C), Americana-Congress Hotel, 520 S. Michigan Ave., A: N/A, Chicago Comicon, 1219 Devon, Chicago, IL 60660. PH: 312-274-1832 or Minicon Hotline PH: 312 743 4493

OCONOMOWOC, WIS. – June 8-10 – X Con 8 (Sf), Olympia Resort & Spa, A: $12 until April 30, $17 after. X Con 8, PO Box 7, Milwaukee, WI 53201

ELMHURST, ILL. – June 24 – Elmhurst Comic Book & Baseball Card Show (C, Cd), American Legion, 210 W. Butterfield, A: $1. Graham Crackers Cards & Comics, 214 S. Washington, Naperville, IL 60540. PH: 355-4310 or 968-5250

INDIANAPOLIS, IND. – June 29-July 1 – Inconjunction 4 (Sf), Airport Hilton Inn, A: $9 until April 1, $12 until June 15, $15 after. Inconjunction 4, PO Box 40403, Indianapolis, IN 46224.

ELMHURST, ILL. – Aug. 19 – Elmhurst Comic Book & Baseball Card Show (C, Cd), American Legion, 210 W. Butterfield, A: $1. Graham Crackers Cards & Comics, 214 S. Washington, Naperville, IL 60540. PH: 355-4310 or 968-5250.



① SANDY/ANNIE ② GI-NAS. ③ MARMADUKE ④ UFS. ⑤ DAISY/BLONDIE ⑥ KES. ⑦ DEPUTY DAWG ⑧ TERRYTOONS. ⑨ TIGE/BUSTER BROWN ⑩ SNOOPY ⑪ UFS.

ELMHURST, ILL. – Sept 23. Elmhurst Comic Book & Baseball Card Show (C, Cd). American Legion, 219 W Butterfield, & $1 Graham Crackers Cards & Comics, 214 S. Washington, Naperville, IL 60540 PH 355-4310 or 968-5250

CLEVELAND, OHIO – Oct 13 – Saturday's Child Comics-Nostalgia Show (C). The Somerset Inn, Jct. R. 422 & 43, 11 a.m.-6 p.m. A. $1 50 Joe Tricarichi, 2520 Ashurst, Cleveland, OH 44118 PH 216-932-8596

ELMHURST, ILL. – Nov. 25 – Elmhurst Comic Book & Baseball Card Show (C, Cd). American Legion, 210 W Butterfield, & $1. Graham Crackers Cards & Comics, 214 S. Washington, Naperville, IL 60540 PH 355-4310 or 968-5250

MIDDLE ATLANTIC

STATES IN REGION: Del., Md., N.C., S.C., Va., W. Va. and Wash. D.C.

WHEATON, MD. – Jan. 8 – Comic Book Show (C), Best Western University Blvd. & Viers Mill Rd., A. N/A PH: 301-290-4567

RICHMOND, VA. – Jan. 15 – Comic Book Show (C), Holiday Inn, 6531 W. Broad St., A: N/A. PH. 301-290-4567

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Jan. 28-29 – Creation Convention (ST, C), Hyatt Crystal City, 2799 Jefferson Davis Hwy., A: N/A PH 800-645-6579 or PH 516-747-2033.

COCKEYSVILLE, MD. – Feb. 17-19 – Clipperconvention (SF, ST, M), Marriott's Hunt Valley Inn, A: $20 until Dec. 15, $25 after ClipperCon, c/o Manon McChesney, 3429 Chestnut Ave. Baltimore, MD 21211

VIRGINIA BEACH, VA. – April 13-15 – Atlanticon II (SF, ST), Sheraton Beach Inn & Conference Center, A: $15, under 12 $6, until Jan 1, $17.50, under 12 $7, until April 1, $20, under 12 $8, after, F. $40 Atlanticon II, PO Box 9590, Hampton, VA 23670

BALTIMORE, MD. – April 20-22 – Balticon 18 (SI, M), Hyatt Regency Hotel, A: $15 after Dec., 1, $25 at door, children 7-13 $7.50, under 7 free, T: 50 F. $35 Balticon 18, PO Box 686, Baltimore MD 21203

BALTIMORE, MD. – Aug. 17-19 – Fanex '84 (SI, M), Hyatt Regency, A: $15, under 12 $6, under 5 free, T: 95, F $45 Fanex, PO Box 28287, Baltimore, MD 21234.

ANNAPOLIS, MD. – Aug. 24-26 – Phoenixcon 84 (SI, M), Holiday Inn, 210 Holiday Court, A: $12 until April 30, $15 until July 31, $18 after Phoenixcon, PO Box 599, Arnold, MD 21012

MOUNTAIN

STATES IN REGION: Ariz., Colo., Idaho, Mont., Nev., N.M., Utah and Wyo

PHOENIX, ARIZ. – March 3-4 – Advertising & Paper Collectibles Convention (C), Carnelback Sahara Hotel, 7th Ave., A: N/A. SASE, Real Stuff Nostalgia Conventions, Suite One, 7331 East Papago Dr., Scottsdale, AZ. PH: 945-7373

COLORADO SPRINGS, COLO. – March 9-11 – KingKon 5 (M, SF), Holiday Inn North, I-25 & Fillmore, A: $12 until March 1, $15 at door, 6-16 $5, under 6 free. King Kon 5, PO Box 1284, Colorado Springs, CO 80901

VAIL, COLO. – May 4-6 – Colorado Mountain Con (SI), Cascade Village, A: $8 before April 1. Stan Gardner, Colorado Mountain Con, Box 541, Leadville, CO 80461 PH 303-486 8016

NEW ENGLAND

STATES IN REGION: Conn., Maine, Mass., N.H., R.I. and Vt

WARWICK, R.I. – Jan 12-15 – Midland Mall Collectibles Show (C, Cd). Midland Mall, Rts. 95 & 295, A. free, Filomena Marino, 75 Knowles Way, Narragansett, RI

WEST HAVEN, CONN. – Jan 15 – West Haven Baseball Card Show (C, Cd). Knight's of Columbus Hall, 263 Center St., 10 a.m.-4 p.m. A. $2 donation, under 12 $1 Harold Finer, 83 April St., West Haven, CT 06516. PH 203-933-3489

PORTSMOUTH, N.H. – Feb. 4 – Portsmouth Mini-Con I (C), Howard Johnson's, Portsmouth Rotary, A. $1 in advance, $2 at door Ralph DiBernardo, Jr., 1374 Islington St., Portsmouth, NH 03801. PH 603-436-6895

BOSTON, MASS. – March 3-4 – Creation Convention (C), Hyat Cambridge, 575 Memorial Dr., A. N/A. PH 800-645-6579 or 516-747-2033.

NASHUA, N.H. – March 10 – Bishop Guertin High School Sports Collectors & Comic Book Show (C, Cd), Bishop Guertin High School, A free, T 138.

WEST HAVEN, CONN. March 18 – West Haven Baseball Card Show (C, Cd), Knight's of Columbus Hall, 263 Center St., 10 a.m.-4 p.m., A. $2 donation, under 12 $1. Harold Finer, 83 April St., West Haven, CT 06516 PH 203-933 3489

WEST HAVEN, CONN. – May 27 – West Haven Baseball Card Show (C, Cd). Knight's of Columbus Hall, 263 Center St., 10 a.m.-4 p.m., A. $2 donation, under 12 $1. Harold Finer, 83 April St., West Haven, CT 06516. PH: 203-933-3489.

WEST HAVEN, CONN. – July 15 – West Haven Baseball Card Show (C, Cd). Knight's of Columbus Hall, 263 Center St., 10 a.m.-4 p.m., A. $2 donation, under 12 $1. Harold Finer, 83 April St., West Haven, CT 06516. PH 203-933-3489 **WEST HAVEN, CONN.** – Sept. 16 – West Haven Baseball Card Show (C, Cd). Knight's of Columbus Hall, 263 Center St., 10 a.m.-4 p.m., A. $2 donation, under 12 $1. Harold Finer, 83 April St., West Haven, CT 06516 PH. 203-933-3489

WEST HAVEN, CONN. Nov. 18 – West Haven Baseball Card Show (C, Cd), Knight's of Columbus Hall, 263 Center St., 10 a.m.-4 p.m., A. $2 donation, under 12 $1. Harold Finer, 83 April St., West Haven, CT 06516. PH 203-933-3489

NORTHEAST

STATES IN REGION: N.J., N.Y. and Pa.

NEW YORK, N.Y. – Jan 7-8 – Creation's Annual Multi-Media Science Fiction Convention (SF, C), Roosevelt Hotel, 45th & Madison, A., N/A. PH: 800-645-6579 or PH 516-747-2033

PHILADELPHIA, PA. – Jan. 14-15 – Creation Convention (C), Adam's Mark Hotel, City Line Ave & Monument Rd., A. N/A PH 800-645-6579 or PH 516-747-2033

BAYSIDE, QUEENS, N.Y. – Jan. 14 – Baseball Card & Comic Book Show (C, Cd), Adria II Conference Center, 221-17 Northern Blvd., 10 a.m.-5 p.m., A: free. Steve Sabow, 217-15 47 Road, Bayside, NY 11361. PH. 212-631 2025 or Mitch Nat, 200-34 45 Drive, Bayside, NY 11361 PH. 212-224-9699

ROCKVILLE CENTRE, N.Y. – Jan 15 – Long Island Comic Book & Collector's Market Convention (C, Cd, M), Holiday Inn, 173 Sunrise Hwy., 10 a.m.-5 p.m., A free Cosmic Comics & Books, 139 N Park Ave., Rockville Centre, NY 11570 PH 516-763-1133

PARAMUS, N.J. – Jan 18-21 – Antiques & Collectibles Show (C, Cd), Bergen Mall, A: free Gloria Rothstein, 12 Chatham St., Suffern, NY 10901 PH 914-357-8410

HAPPAUGE, N.Y. – Jan 21 – Comic Book & Baseball Card Show (C, Cd), Dennis Petsih, Phi: 516-724-7422 (6-7 p.m.) or 516-582-3600 (day of show only)

TOWSON, MD. – Jan 21 – Serendipity (C), Quality Inn, Baltimore Beltway Exit 26S, A $1 Robert Horn, 4 Oak Rd Elkton, MD 21921 PH 301 398-6685

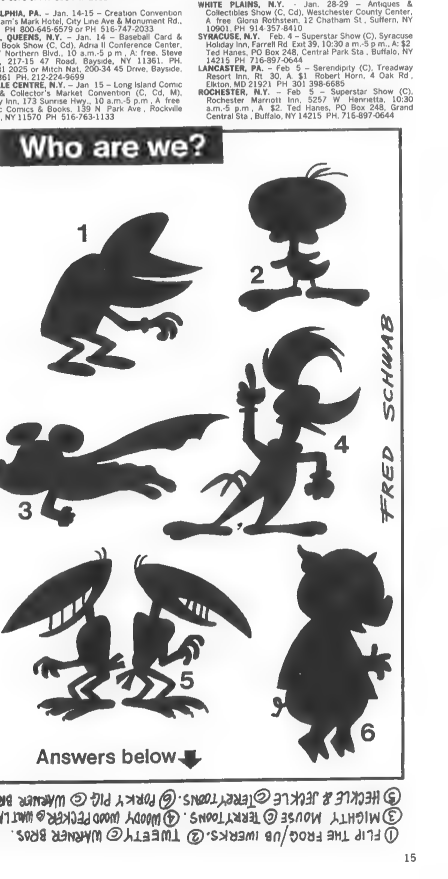
BUFFALO, N.Y. – Jan. 22 – Super Sunday Comic & Card Show (C, Cd), Buffalo Airport Holiday Inn, 4600 Genesee St., 10 a.m.-3 p.m., A $1 50 Ted Hanes, PO Box 248, Central Park Sta., Buffalo, NY 14215 PH 716-897-0644

WHITE PLAINS, N.Y. Jan. 28-29 – Antiques & Collectibles Show (C, Cd), Westchester County Center, A free Gloria Rothstein, 12 Chatham St., Suffern, NY 10901. PH 914-357-8410

SYRACUSE, N.Y. Feb. 4 – Superstar Show (C), Syracuse Holiday Inn, Farrell Rd. Exit 39, 10:30 a.m.-5 p.m., A: $2 Ted Hanes, PO Box 248, Central Park Sta., Buffalo, NY 14215 PH. 716-897-0644

LANCASTER, PA. – Feb. 5 – Serendipity (C), Treadway Resort Inn, Rt. 30, A $1 Robert Horn, 4 Oak Rd., Elkton, MD 21921 PH 301 398-6685

ROCHESTER, N.Y. – Feb 5 – Superstar Show (C), Rochester Marriott Inn, 5257 W Hannetta, 10:30 a.m.-5 p.m., A $2. Ted Hanes, PO Box 248, Grand Central Sta., Buffalo, NY 14215 PH. 716-897-0644



① FLIP THE FROG/UB IWERKS. ② TWEETY © WARNER BROS. ③ MIGHTY MOUSE © TERRYTOONS. ④ WOODY WOODPECKER © WALTER LANTZ. ⑤ HECKLE & JECKLE © TERRYTOONS. ⑥ PORKY PIG © WARNER BROS.

BAYSIDE, QUEENS, N.Y. – Feb. 11 – Baseball Card & Comic Book Show (C, Cd). Adria II Conference Center, 221-17 Northern Blvd , 10 a.m-5 p.m., A: free. Steve Sabow, 217-15 47 Road, Bayside, NY 11361 PH: 212-631-2025 or Mitch Nat, 200-34 45 Drive, Bayside, NY 11361 PH 212-224-9699

ROCKVILLE CENTRE, N.Y. – Feb. 12 – Long Island Comic Book & Collector's Market Convention (C, Cd, M). Holiday Inn, 173 Sunrise Hwy., 10 a.m-5 p.m., A: free. Cosmic Comics & Books, 139 N. Park Ave., Rockville Centre, NY 11570 PH: 516-763-1133

KENILWORTH, N.J. – Feb 12 – Master Comic-Con I (C). Holiday Inn, G S. Pkwy Exit 138, 9 a.m -5 p.m., A: $90¢, F: $25 Andrew Karlin, 740 Midland Blvd , Union, NJ, 07083 PH: 201 688-8150

HAPPAUGE, N.Y. – Feb. 18 – Comic Book & Baseball Card Show (C, Cd), Ramada Inn, Off L.I. Expy Exit 57, A: 50¢ Dennis Petrilli, PH: 516-724-7422 (6-7 p.m.) or 516-382-3600 (day of show only)

PHILADELPHIA, PA. – Feb. 25-26 - Philadelphia Paper & Advertising Fair (C, Cd, M). Adam's Mark Hotel, City Line Ave., Rt 1 &1-76, A: N/A G.S Gallery, Inc., PO Box 4, Coopersburg, PA 18036 PH: 215-282-4269. 9-5 Mon -Sat

NEW YORK, N.Y. – Feb 25-26 – Creation Part Two (C), Roosevelt Hotel, 45th & Madison Ave , A: N/A. PH 800-645-6579 or PH 516-747-2033

ROCHESTER, N.Y. – Feb 25-26 – Collector's Show & Sale (C, Cd). Dome Arena, Monroe County Fairgrounds, A: $2, under 12 free, Kathy Komorowski, 1356 Buffalo Rd , Rochester, NY 14624 PH 716-235-3977

BUFFALO, N.Y. – Feb. 26 – All Star Comic & Card Show (C, Cd). Aurport Holiday Inn, 4600 Genesee St , 10:30 a.m.-4 p.m., A: free. Ted Hanes, PO Box 248, Central Park Sta , Buffalo, NY 14215 PH: 716 897-0644

EDISON, N.J. – Feb. 29-March 4 – Antiques & Collectibles Show (C, Cd). Menlo Park Mall, A: free Gloria Rothstein, 12 Chatham St., Suffern, NY 10901 PH 914-357-8410

ALBANY, N.Y. – March 2 – All Star Comic & Card Show (C, Cd). Polish Community Center, Washington Ave . Ext, 10:30 a.m .4 p.m. A: $1 Ted Hanes, PO Box 248, Central Park Sta , Buffalo, NY 14215. PH 716 897 0644

ROCHESTER, N.Y. – March 4 – All Star Comic & Card Show (C, Cd). Marriott Inn, 5257 W. Henretta, 10 30 a.m -4 p.m ., A: $1 50 Ted Hanes, PO Box 248, Central Park Sta , Buffalo, NY 14215 PH 716 897-0644

BAYSIDE, QUEENS, N.Y. – March 10 – Baseball Card & Comic Book Show (C, Cd). Adria II Conference Center, 221-17 Northern Blvd , 10 a.m -5 p.m., A: free. Steve Sabow, 217-15 47 Road, Bayside, NY 11361. PH. 212-631-2025 or Mitch Nat, 200-34 45 Drive, Bayside, NY 11361 PH 212-224 9699

KENILWORTH, N.J. – March 11 – Master Comic-Con I (C). Holiday Inn, G S Pkwy Exit 138, 9 a.m -5 p.m., A: $90¢, F: $25 Andrew Karlin, 740 Midland Blvd , Union, NJ, 07083 PH 201-688-8150

HENDERSONVILLE, N.C. – March 16-18 – Lunacon '84 (Sf). Sheraton, A: $16 until Feb. 17, $19 at door Lunacon 84, PO Box 792, Brooklyn, NY 11230

WHITE PLAINS, N.Y. – March 17-18 – Sports & Paper Collectible Show & Sale (C, Cd). Westchester County Center, A: N/A. Gloria Rothstein, 12 Chatham St., Suffern, NY 10901 PH: 914-357-8410

ELLENTHPA, PA. – March 17 – Philadelphia Fest 2 (C, Cd, M). George Washington Motor Lodge, Convention Hall, 155 Rt. 22 E, A: $3.50 - 1 day, $5 - 2 days G.S. Gallery, Inc., PO Box 4, Coopersburg, PA 18036 PH: 215-282-4269. Mon-Sat.) Sun.

ROCKVILLE CENTRE, N.Y. – March 18 – Long Island Comic Book & Collector's Market Convention (C, Cd, M). Holiday Inn, 173 Sunrise Hwy., 10 a.m-5 p.m., A: free Cosmic Comics & Books, 139 N. Park Ave., Rockville Centre, NY 11570 PH: 516-763-1133

ALBANY, N.Y. – March 24-25 Tri-City Comic Convention (C, M), Holiday Inn, 1614 Central Ave, Albany, A: $2 Earthworld, PH: 518-465-5495 or John Iavarone, PH 518-489-4508

WHITE PLAINS, N.Y. – March 31-April 1 – Antique & Collectible Show (C, Cd). Westchester County Center, A free. Gloria Rothstein, 12 Chatham St., Suffern, NY 10901. PH 914-357-8410

SYRACUSE, N.Y. – March 31 – Superstar Show (C). Holiday Inn, Farrell Rd Exit 39, 10 30 a.m.-5 p.m., A: $3 Ted Hanes, PO Box 248, Central Park Sta , Buffalo, NY 14215 PH 716-897-0644

BUFFALO, N.Y. – April 1 – Superstar Show (C). Marriott Inn, 1340 Millersport Hwy., 11 a.m.-5 p.m., A: $3. Ted Hanes, PO Box 248, Central Park Sta., Buffalo, NY 14215 PH: 716-897-0644 **KENILWORTH, N.J.** – April 8 – Master Comic-Con I (C), Holiday Inn, G S Pkwy Exit 138, 9 a.m -5 p.m., A: $50¢, F: $25 Andrew Karlin, 740 Midland Blvd , Union, NJ 07083, PH 201-688-8150

BAYSIDE, QUEENS, N.Y. – April 14 – Baseball Card & Comic Book Show (C, Cd), Adria II Conference Center, 221-17 Northern Blvd , 10 a.m -5 p.m., A: free. Steve Sabow, 217-15 47 Road, Bayside, NY 11361. PH. 212-631-2025 or Mitch Nat, 200-34 45 Drive, Bayside, NY 11361 PH 212 224-9699

ROCKVILLE CENTRE, N.Y. – April 15 – Long Island Comic Book & Collector's Market Convention (C, Cd, M). Holiday Inn, 173 Sunrise Hwy., 10 a.m-5 p.m., A: free Cosmic Comics & Books, 139 N. Park Ave , Rockville Centre, NY 11570 PH 516-763-1133

SYRACUSE, N.Y. – May 4-6 – Onocon '84 (Sf). Sheraton Inn, Convention Center, Seventh North St & Electronics Pkwy., A: N/A, SASE, Onocon '84, PO Box 305, Syracuse, NY 13208.

BAYSIDE, QUEENS, N.Y. – May 12 – Baseball Card & Comic Book Show (C, Cd), Adria II Conference Center, 221-17 Northern Blvd , 10 a.m-5 p.m., A: free Steve Sabow, 217-15 47 Road, Bayside, NY 11361. PH 212-631-2025 or Mitch Nat, 200-34 45 Drive, Bayside, NY 11361 PH 212-224-9699

ALBANY, N.Y. – May 12-13 – AlbanyCon-Comic Fandom Convention (C), Holiday Inn, 1614 Central Ave., 11 a.m.-6 p.m., A: $3.50 Ted Hanes, PO Box 248, Central Park Sta , Buffalo, NY 14215 PH 716-897-0644

ROCKVILLE CENTRE, N.Y. – May 13 – Long Island Comic Book & Collector's Market Convention (C, Cd, M). Holiday Inn, 173 Sunrise Hwy., 10 a.m-5 p.m., A: free Cosmic Comics & Books, 139 N Park Ave , Rockville Centre, NY 11570 PH 516-763-1133

BAYSIDE, QUEENS, N.Y. – June 9 – Baseball Card & Comic Book Show (C, Cd), Adria II Conference Center, 221-17 Northern Blvd , 10 a.m-5 p.m., A: free. Steve Sabow, 217-15 47 Road, Bayside, NY 11361 PH 212-631-2025 or Mitch Nat, 200-34 45 Drive, Bayside, NY 11361 PH 212 224-9699

ROCKVILLE CENTRE, N.Y. – June 10 – Long Island Comic Book & Collector's Market Convention (C, Cd, M), Holiday Inn, 173 Sunrise Hwy., 10 a.m -5 p.m ,A: free Cosmic Comics & Books, 139 N Park Ave , Rockville Centre, NY 11570 PH 516-763-1133

BAYSIDE, QUEENS, N.Y. – July 14 – Baseball Card & Comic Book Show (C, Cd), Adria II Conference Center, 221-17 Northern Blvd , 10 a.m-5 p.m , A: free. Steve Sabow, 217-15 47 Road, Bayside, NY 11361. PH 212-631-2025 or Mitch Nat, 200-34 45 Drive, Bayside, NY 11361 PH 212-224 9699

BUFFALO, N.Y. – Aug 3-5 Pyramids of Buffalo/Dr Who Convention (C, DW), Buffalo Hilton, Church & Terrace, A: N/A John Zawadzki, 18 Hirschbeck St , Buffalo, NY 14212 PH 716-894-6466

BAYSIDE, QUEENS, N.Y. – Aug 11 – Baseball Card & Comic Book Show (C, Cd), Adria II Conference Center, 221-17 Northern Blvd , 10 a.m-5 p.m., A: free. Steve Sabow, 217-15 47 Road, Bayside, NY 11361. PH 212-631-2025 or Mitch Nat, 200-34 45 Drive, Bayside, NY 11361 PH 212-224 9699

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BAYSIDE, QUEENS, N.Y. – Sept 8 – Baseball Card & Comic Book Show (C, Cd), Adria II Conference Center, 221-17 Northern Blvd., 10 a.m -5 p.m ; A: free. Steve Sabow, 217-15 47 Road, Bayside, NY 11361. PH 212-631-2025 or Mitch Nat, 200-34 45 Drive, Bayside, NY 11361 PH 212-224-9699

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BAYSIDE, QUEENS, N.Y. – Oct 13 Baseball Card & Comic Book Show (C, Cd), Adria II Conference Center, 221-17 Northern Blvd., 10 a.m.-5 p.m., A: free. Steve Sabow, 217-15 47 Road, Bayside, NY 11361. PH 212-631-2025 or Mitch Nat, 200-34 45 Drive, Bayside, NY 11361 PH 212-224-9699

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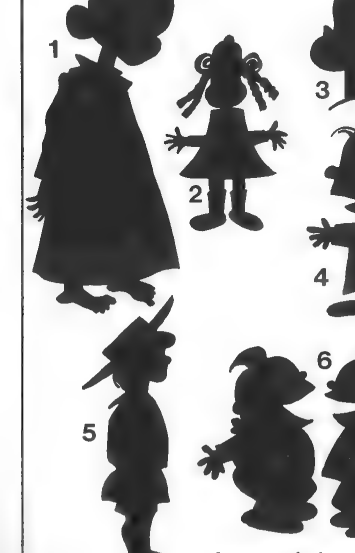

① THE YELLOW KID. ② LITTLE LULU / MARGE. ③ CHARLIE BROWN / PEANUTS ④ UPS & HENRY ⑤ KFS. ⑥ BUSTER BROWN. ⑦ KATZEN JAMMER KIDS © KFS

BAYSIDE, QUEENS, N.Y. – Nov. 10 – Baseball Card & Comic Book Show (C, Cd). Alexander Hamilton Center, 221-17 Northern Blvd., 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; A: free. Steve Sabow, 217-15 47 Road, Bayside, NY 11361. PH: 212-631-2025 or Mitch Nat, 200-34 45 Drive, Bayside, NY 11361 PH 212-224-9699

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PACIFIC

STATES IN REGION: Alaska, Calif., Hawaii, Ore. and Wash

LOS ANGELES, CALIF. – Jan. 1 – Los Angeles Comic Book & Science Fiction Convention (C, Sf). Ambassador Hotel, 3400 Wilshire Blvd. A: $1.50. Bruce Schwartz, 921 N Gardner, Apt 9, Los Angeles, CA 90046

STUDIO CITY, GA. – Jan. 7 – Autograph Party with Jack (Kurp)Narby, American Comic Book Co., 12206 Ventura Blvd., Noon- 2 p.m., A: N/A. American Comic Book Co., 12206 Ventura Blvd., Studio City, CA 91604. PH 213-980-4976

LOS ANGELES, CALIF. – Feb 5 – Los Angeles Comic Book & Science Fiction Convention (C, Sf). Ambassador Hotel, 3400 Wilshire Blvd. A: $1.50. Bruce Schwartz, 921 N. Gardner, Apt 9, Los Angeles, CA 90046.

SAN JOSE, CALIF. – March 2-4 – Bayfilk 2 (Sf), Red Lion Inn. A: $17 until Jan 1, $20 after. Off Centaur Publications, PO Box 424, El Cerrito, CA 94530

LOS ANGELES, CALIF. – March 4 – Los Angeles Comic Book & Science Fiction Convention (C, Sf). Ambassador Hotel, 3400 Wilshire Blvd. A: $1.50. Bruce Schwartz, 921 N Gardner, Apt. 9, Los Angeles, CA 90046

SAN JOSE, CALIF. – March 17 – Collectors Convention (C). Civic Auditorium, McCabe Hall, 145 W. San Carlos. A: $3 Dan Vado, PO Box 6993, San Jose, CA 95150. PH 408-295-5680 or 408-279 9070

LOS ANGELES, CALIF. – April 1 – Los Angeles Comic Book & Science Fiction Convention (C, Sf). Ambassador Hotel, 3400 Wilshire Blvd. A: $1.50. Bruce Schwartz, 921 N Gardner, Apt. 9, Los Angeles, CA 90046

SAN DIEGO, CALIF. – April 13-15 – Costume Con 2 (Sf), Town & Country Hotel-Convention Center. A: $15 until Sept. 8, $20 until Jan 1, $25 until April 1, $30 at door. SASE, Fantasy Costumers Guild, PO Box 1947, Spring Valley, CA 92077

LOS ANGELES, CALIF. May 6 Los Angeles Comic Book & Science Fiction Convention (C, Sf). Ambassador Hotel, 3400 Wilshire Blvd. A: $1.50. Bruce Schwartz, 921 N. Gardner, Apt. 9, Los Angeles, CA 90046

LOS ANGELES, CALIF. – June 3 – Los Angeles Comic Book & Science Fiction Convention (C, Sf). Ambassador Hotel, 3400 Wilshire Blvd, A: $1.50 Bruce Schwartz, 921 N Gardner, Apt. 9, Los Angeles, CA 90046.

LOS ANGELES, CALIF. – June 22-24 – ShadowCon VIII (TV, Fantasy). Pacifica Hotel at LAX, 6161 Centennela Ave., A: $15 until Jan 1, $20 after Barbara Fister LITZ, 8601A W Cermak Rd. North Riverside, IL 60546 PH 312-447-3317

SAN DIEGO, CALIF. – June 28-July 1 – San Diego Comic-Con (C), Convention & Performing Arts Center, 2nd & B Sts. A: $15 until Jan. 31, $20 until May 31, $25 after. Jerry Beeck, PO Box 17066, San Diego, CA 92117

PORTLAND, ORE. – June 29-July 3 – Westercon 37 (Sf), Marriott Hotel, 1401 SW Front, A: $15 until Dec. 31, $20 after Westercon 37, PO Box 16155, Portland, OR 97216. PH 503-761-8768

LOS ANGELES, CALIF. – July 1 – Los Angeles Comic Book & Science Fiction Convention (C, Sf). Ambassador Hotel, 3400 Wilshire Blvd, A: $1 50. Bruce Schwartz, 921 N Gardner, Apt. 9, Los Angeles, CA 90046

LOS ANGELES, CALIF. – Aug 5 – Los Angeles Comic Book & Science Fiction Convention (C, Sf). Ambassador Hotel, 3400 Wilshire Blvd. A: $1 50. Bruce Schwartz, 921 N. Gardner, Apt. 9, Los Angeles, CA 90046

LOS ANGELES, CALIF. – Sept 2 – Los Angeles Comic Book & Science Fiction Convention (C, Sf). Ambassador Hotel, 3400 Wilshire Blvd, A: $1.50. Bruce Schwartz, 921 N. Gardner, Apt. 9, Los Angeles, CA 90046.

LOS ANGELES, CALIF. – Oct 7 – Los Angeles Comic Book & Science Fiction Convention (C, Sf). Ambassador Hotel, 3400 Wilshire Blvd, A: $1 50. Bruce Schwartz, 921 N Gardner, Apt. 9, Los Angeles, CA 90046.

LOS ANGELES, CALIF. – Nov. 4 - Los Angeles Comic Book & Science Fiction Convention (C, Sf). Ambassador Hotel, 3400 Wilshire Blvd, A: $1.50. Bruce Schwartz, 921 N. Gardner, Apt. 9, Los Angeles, CA 90046

LOS ANGELES, CALIF. – Dec 2 – Los Angeles Comic Book & Science Fiction Convention (C, Sf). Ambassador Hotel, 3400 Wilshire Blvd, A $1 50 Bruce Schwartz, 921 N Gardner Apt 9, Los Angeles, CA 90046

PLAINS

STATES IN REGION: Iowa, Kan., Minn., Mo., Neb., N.D and S.D.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN. April 20-22 – Minicon '84 (Sf), Leamington Hotel Minicon, PO Box 2128, Loop Station, Minneapolis, MN 55402

OMAHA, NEB. – April 27-29 – ConTretemps 3 (C, Sf), A: N/A Con Tretemps 3, PO Box 12422, Omaha, NE 68112

SOUTHEAST

STATES IN REGION: Ala., Fla., Ga., Miss. and Tenn

WEST PALM BEACH, FLA. – Jan 14-15 – Best of 3 Worlds Comic & Scifi Con (C, Cd, M), Sheraton Motor Inn, 1901 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd., A $4 50 per day until Jan 10, $6 per day at door/ Family Book Trader, 4311 Broadway, West Palm Beach, FL 33407. PH: 305-848-0011 or 305-739-0861.

N. MIAMI BEACH, FLA. – Jan 15 – Monthly Baseball Card & Comic Book Show (C, Cd), 1551 NE 207th St., 10 a.m.-5 p.m., A: $1 donation, F: $10. Floyd Hinkley, PH: 681-5445

N. MIAMI BEACH, FLA. – Jan. 21-22 – Sports & Paper Collectible Show & Sale (C, Cd), Skylake Mall, 183 St. & NE 17th Ave., A: N/A. Joe Sokoloff, 444 Brickell Ave., Miami, FL 33131. PH: 305-358 8372

MIAMI, FLA. – Feb. 3-5 – Omnicon V (Sf, C, Dr), Miami Marriott Hotel, 1633 Bayshore Dr., A: $16 50 for 2 days, $19.50 for 3 days. SASE, Omnicon V, PO Box 970308, Miami FL 33197. PH: 305-253-6842 or PH 305-584-4258

ATLANTA, GA. – March 30-April 1 – Istacon I (Sf), Northlake Hilton, 4156 LaVista Rd., I:285, A: $15 until Jan 1, $20 until March 1, F: $20. Istacon I, c/o 939-A Waverly Ct., Norcross, GA 30071.

PENSACOLA, FLA. April 7 – Pensacon (C, Sf), Holiday Inn University Mall. Flandrau Blvd. A $2 advance, $3 at door. David H. Sincere, 1309 E. Blount St. #1, Pensacola, FL 32503 PH 904-433-7691

CHATTANOOGA, TENN. – June 21-24 - Deepsouthcon (Sf), Readhouse Hotel, A $15 until June 1, $20 after, F. $20 CDSC, Irvin Koch, 835 Chattanooga Bk. Bldg Chattanooga, TN 37402 PH/ 404-767-7360. (SASE)

SOUTH CENTRAL

STATES IN REGION: Ark., La., Okla. and Tex.

AMARILLO, TEX. – Jan. 27-29 – Pirate Con (Sf, M), Ramada Inn, I-40 at Nelson, A: $10 until Dec 15, $12 after, F. $40 SASE, Starbase Amarillo, c/o Dragons Cove, PO Box 30961, Amarillo, TX 79120

CANADA

TORONTO, ONTARIO – Feb 12 – Toronto Comic Convention (C), Hotel Westin-Toronto, University at Richmond, 11 a.m.-5 p.m., A: $4, Dragon Lady, 200 Queen St W, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4V 2Z. PH 416 596-1602

BRIGHTON, ENGLAND – April 20-23 – Seacon '84 (Sf), A 7 pounds, Pauline Morgan, 321 Sarehole Rd., Hall Green, Birmingham B28 0AL, England

① SAD SACK ② GEO. BAKER, ③ DAGWOOD/BLONDIE ④ KFS ⑤ DICK TRACY ⑥ CT-VN'S, ⑦ ALLEY OOP ⑧ NEA ⑨ LITTLE KING ⑩ KFS, ⑪ HAGAR, KFS, ⑫ ALLEY OOP ⑬ NEA, ⑭ JUGGS ⑮ KFS, ⑯ SNEEZE/BEETLE BAILEY ⑰ KFS.

THE MLJ STORY PART II

"TOP NOTCH COMICS"

By Ron Goulart

NOTE: In the interval between the appearance of the first installment of our history and this one, the Red Circle line of comics has fallen by the wayside, renamed the Archie Adventure line, and some of the exhumed old MLJ heroes are once again defunct. Since we're concentrating on the late Thirties and early Forties, this more recent collapse doesn't affect the following account.

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The second MLJ title was *Top-Notch Comics*, launched a month after *Blue Ribbon* and with a cover date on its initial issue of December 1939. Although the magazine boasted only one superhero when it commenced, by the end of its first year *Top-Notch* would house a bunch of them.

As stated before, the material in the earliest issues of the MLJ titles was produced by the pioneer sweatshop run by Harry "A" Chesler. Although he'd been in operation since 1936, turning out stuff for various publishers, Chesler doesn't seem to have made much of an effort to keep up with what was going on in the burgeoning comic-book business. The text and artwork his outfit churned out in 1939 was very much like the product of three years earlier, for the most part lowbrow humor and illustrated pulp that indicates little comprehension of the nature of the new field and no realization of how important the coming of Superman in 1938 had been.

The only true superhero cooked up for the first issue was The Wizard, also known as The Man With The Super Brain. Originally, he performed his deeds wearing black tie and tails, a cape, and a red domino mask. In that clean-shaven era, he was one of the few comic-book mystery men who sported a moustache. The Wiz' specialty was "plots against the government" and invasions. In civilian life he was Blane Whitney, polo-playing scion of one of America's first families. "With his super-brain and photographic mind The Wizard is able to visualize far-away happenings. With these mental powers and his super-strength, he ferrets out plots against the U.S." In his earliest battles, combatting such foreign scourges as the Jatsonian invaders and the equally nasty Borentals, The Wizard used many amazing weapons of his own invention. These included Secret Formula F 22 X, the 1½ VX 0 Ray, and his Dynamagno-Saw Ray Projector. The initial artist to depict the super-patriotic adventures of this dapper good guy was Edd Ashe Jr.

Al Camy took over after a few issues and, in *Top-Notch* #7 (August 1940), designed him a new costume. It consisted of blue tunic and tights, red shorts, and cape. The red mask was retained, along with the moustache. In this episode, by the way, The Wizard teamed up with *Pep Comics'* Shield to thwart the invasion plans of the Mosconians. Apparently not satisfied with wearing an outfit very much like that of DC's Superman, The Wizard next set out to emulate DC's Batman. In #8 he acquired a feisty young companion. A concluding caption proclaims, "The Wizard fights alone no longer! Now side by side with The Man With The Super Brain is Roy, the Super Boy, the most astounding youth in all history! Together these two fight all evil." All these improvements ought to have assured the Wiz of a long, fruitful career as star of the magazine. A bit further along we'll see what happened in #9.

Most of the other features offered in *Top-Notch's* premiere issue were pretty lacklustre. Jack and Otto Binder turned out "Scott Rand," about a Brick Bradford type who jaunted into the past in his time car. There was "Air Patrol," a dull aviation strip, "'Lucky' Coyne," a dull detective strip, and "The West Pointer," a dull military strip. For magic fans there was "The Mystic," which offered a turbanned stage magician who dabbled in detection between shows. All of these ran five or six pages, crowded eight panels onto a page, and had layouts about as visually exciting as your maiden aunt's wallpaper. Charles Biro, a man destined to shake up the whole comic-book business, contributed "Swift of the Secret Service." At this point, he was still working in the drab Chesler house style. About the only bright spot was provided by Jack Cole, who wrote and drew a true-crime feature called "Man-Hunters." Cole, who also had a full page of gag cartoons in the issue, did the crime thing in his still-developing straight style. Unlike many

All of these ran five or six pages, crowded eight panels onto a page, and had layouts about as visually exciting as your maiden aunt's wallpaper.

of his sweatshop colleagues, Cole had discovered that a comic-book page wasn't a newspaper strip. He was already experimenting with provocative layouts and more effective ways of staging and telling his stories.

Another gifted, and still often underrated, artist joined the crew in the second issue. Mort Meskin contributed "Dick Storm," about a clean-cut young fellow whose "fame as an adventurer has spread far and wide." Meskin, who'd been influenced by such excellent pulp illustrators as Edd Cartier and Herbert Morton Stoops (and maybe someday we'll do a piece explaining exactly who *they* were), was simply a much better artist than most of the others in those early issues. He, too, made use of inventive layouts, and the storytelling techniques he developed are better than the stories he was forced to tell.

As mentioned in the last chapter, Bob Phantom has always struck me as a splendid name for a mystery man. He became part of the *Top-Notch* cast in issue #3, the magazine's second super hero. Somewhere about this time, Biro and several of his shop colleagues were wooed away from Chesler to go to work directly for MLJ. The magazines immediately began to look more like contemporary comic books and less like samplers of what was to be found in the bottom of Chesler's trunk.

A new SF feature was added in #4. "Streak Chandler" was set on Mars and drawn by Don Lynch. "Galahad," an Arthurian adventure by Lin Streeter, got going in #5. "The Mystic" was by this time calling himself "Kardak" and had picked up "uncanny, unexplainable powers, which are fortunately used for the suppression of evil."

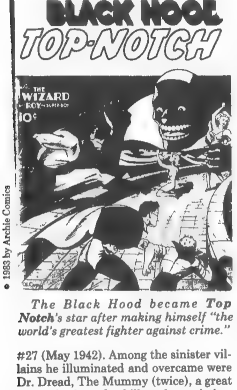
Yet another superman was added in *Top-Notch* #8 (September 1940). "The Firefly" was the creation of writer Harry Shorten and artist Bob Wood. His real name was Harley Hudson, and he was one of those chaps who work hard and long to become a good guy. A trained chemist and biologist, he had already devoted years to study and training when we first met him in his laboratory in the Middle West. "At last," he exclaimed, "I've discovered the secret of the tremendous strength of insects!" The secret, which sounded quite a lot like what Charles Atlas was peddling on the back covers of many of the comic books of the day, involved the developing of "wonderful muscular coordination." While HE was explaining all this to himself, the lights in his lab went out and some fireflies flickered in. "That's what I'll be," he decided. "*A firefly!* Lighting up the darkness that shrouds the underworld!"

The Firefly fought crime for the next couple of years, folding his wings after

THE WIZARD
THE MAN WITH THE SUPER-BRAIN
HE SOLVES ALL PLOTS AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT— BUT THE PLOTTERS CANNOT SOLVE HIS PLOT AGAINST THEM!
WITH HIS SUPER-BRAIN AND PHOTOGRAPHIC MIND THE WIZARD IS ABLE TO VISUALIZE FAR-AWAY HAPPENINGS. WITH THESE MENTAL POWERS AND HIS SUPER-STRENGTH HE FERRETS OUT PLOTS AGAINST THE U.S. GOVERNMENT!
CALLED FROM THE POLO GAME TO ANSWER A LONG DISTANCE PHONE CALL, BLAKE RECEIVES A CRYPTIC MESSAGE FROM HIS BROTHER GROVER, CHIEF OF NAVAL INTELLIGENCE IN WASHINGTON.
C-2B PVX, DON'T WORRY, I'M ON MY WAY.
BLAKE WHITNEY PLAYS POLO ON LONG ISLAND AS TRIUMPHANTLY AS HIS GREAT-GREAT GRANDFATHER, GENERAL STEVEN WHITNEY, MADE WAR DURING THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
IN A FLASH, WITHOUT CONSULTING A CODE BOOK, THE WIZARD TRANSLATES THE CODE.
I THINK I HAD BETTER DISCOVER JUST WHAT IS UP!
AH! THE BORENTALS PLAN TO BOMB THE PANAMA CANAL. THEY ARE HIDDEN ON AN ISLAND IN THE CARIBBEAN. I MUST GET TO THE CANAL BEFORE THEY DO!
THE WIZARD SETS HIS SUPER BRAIN IN MOTION TO PATHOM THE PLOT.
© 1983 by Archie Comics

The Wizard (The Man with the Super Brain) was the only true super-hero in ***Top-Notch Comics*** *#1 (Dec. 1939). Eventually, he was joined by sidekick Roy, the Super Boy — but neither was around by 1943. Though they seemed destined to be stars of the title, it was The Black Hood who took over, after his debut in #9.*

With the second issue, Dick Storm joined the line-up of ***Top-Notch*** *stars. Drawn by Mort Meskin, this two-panel sample does not display the artist's skills in layout and storytelling technique.*



The Black Hood became Top Notch's star after making himself "the world's greatest fighter against crime."

© 1983 by Archie Comics

#27 (May 1942). Among the sinister villains he illuminated and overcame were Dr. Dread, The Mummy (twice), a great white shark, and a killer whose victims "were torn and ripped by the claws of some huge, unspeakable monster!" When Wood abandoned the strip, the artwork chores were assumed by Warren King.

The month after The Firefly's debut, obviously in the grip of costumed hero fever, *Top-Notch* introduced yet another. He was to prove to be one of MLJ's most successful and enduring characters. No match for Archie, of course, but pretty durable.

The Black Hood was another fellow who had to work long and hard to become a costumed hero. While a uniformed cop, Kip Burland is framed by a sinister green-faced villain aptly known as The Skull. Discharged from the force in disgrace, Burland was taken for a ride by minions of the vindictive Skull. Left in the woods to die, he was found by a kindly old hermit. A self-taught scientist and philosopher, the hermit had also been wronged by The Skull and he decided to turn young Burland into a super-crimefighter — someone who would defeat The Skull and then use his "abilities against all crime and criminals!" Burland underwent months of rigid training, "both to rebuild his strength and to learn all of science and all of knowledge, in order to make himself the world's greatest fighter against crime!" Donning the hood that gave him his name, along with yellow tunic, black shorts, and yellow tights, he went forth.

The Hood finally confronted The Skull at a fashionable society masquerade ball. The scoundrel managed to attack his female victim and used a poison pellet on her that caused her skin to shrivel and turn green until "her face is a caricature of *The Skull!*" The Black Hood unmasked his opponent, who'd been attending the party in drag, and turned him over to the law. But The Skull, true to master criminal tradition, kept coming back. He recurred in several issues until The Black Hood succeeded in getting him sent to the hot seat.

As The Black Hood's career progressed he tangled with a succession of other bizarre foes: The vicious Panther Man; Mark Horley, "famed detective by day . . . ruthless murderer by night"; The Mist, "who was able to dissolve his body into a gaseous mist"; Scorpio, billed as the Astrologer of Death; the Mad Killer of the Opera, etc. Al Camy was the original artist. Once The Hood came aboard, The Wizard was relegated to second banana status. He, his superbrain, and Roy were dropped after issue #27 (May 1942).

In the non-super area *Top-Notch* added and substracted characters. "Wings Johnson," as his name implied, was an aviator. Redheaded "Fran Frazer," ruthless rag by Irving Novick, was a globe-trotting newsperson and a champion of women's rights. As a caption explained, she "has faced many weird adventures in foreign lands, and always she has proven that, in spite of her sex, she is a better man than any of her male rivals." Fran held on for 17 issues. For sports fans, there was the St. Louis Kid, a heavyweight boxer whose path to the crown was strewn with pitfalls. On one occasion, for instance, he was forced to go several rounds with a gorilla. Lin Streeter began the feature, newspaper veteran George Storm followed, and the Archie-creator Bob Montana went a few rounds.

In the summer of 1943, anticipating a trend that would sweep through comic books a few years later at the end of the Second World War, the magazine converted to humor. With the bold slogan, "We Dare To Do It! A Joke Book That's Really Funny!" issue #28 (July 1942) appeared under the new title *Top-Notch LAUGH.* Only The Black Hood and Kardak didn't get pink slips; all the other heroes were let go. In their places you found funny stuff. The new star of the magazine was a Li'l Abner simulacrum with the tasteful name of Pokey Oakey. This was the creation of Don Dean, longtime ghost on the *Big Chief Wahoo* newspaper strip, and the first episodes looked as though they might be recycled samples of an unsold strip of his own.

Dean, a pretty good artist if not a subtle humorist, also contributed "Senor Siesta." The senor was a diminutive Mexican fruit peddler who talked like a Mel Blanc Latin and got into humorous misadventures with bandits, politicians, and long-legged senoritas. Bob Montana was responsible for "Percy," another teen-age epic. *Top-Notch's* resident dumb, sexy blonde was a lady known as "Suzie." Eventually the magazine added "Clooney Gus," about a homeless ghost, "Stupidman and the 3 Monkey Teers," which defies description, and "Dotty & Ditto." This last starred a little blonde cowgirl, her parrot, and her little Indian boyfriend. Bill Woggon, the Katy Keene man, was in charge and seemed to have a good deal of fun.

The Black Hood probably felt like a clergyman stranded in a boarding house full of carnival performers.

With issue #30 (November 1942) The Black Hood became the only straight character in the book. He probably felt like a clergyman stranded in a boarding house full of carnival performers, but he stuck to his guns until #44 (February 1944). After one more issue the magazine became just plain *Laugh Comics.* A sturdy fellow, The Hood survived for another two years in his own quarterly. In his final days, drawn by Novick, he shed his costume to work in civvies as a hardboiled private eye.

Once again we've used up our space. Be sure to tune in next time when we talk about a super G-Man who wrapped himself in the flag, a murdering superhero who was one of the few ever to get killed on the job, and a redheaded teenager who revolutionized the comic-book business.

The Cost of Collecting:

TOP-NOTCH COMICS (. . . Laugh No. 28-45; Laugh No. 46 on) Dec. 1939 — No. 45, June, 1944
MLJ Magazines

	Good	Fine	Mint
1-Origin The Wizard; Kardak, the Mystic Magician begins; J. Cole-a	48.00	145.00	310.00
2-Jack Cole-a	25.00	75.00	165.00
3-Bob Phantom begins; J. Cole-a	20.00	60.00	130.00
4	17.00	50.00	105.00
5	13.50	40.00	80.00
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TWENTY YEARS WITH THE TEEN TITANS!

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By Lou Mougin

It was a time when boys were boys and men were men and both of 'em, sometimes, were super-heroes.

Specifically, it was early spring of 1964, not long after the advent of the Beatles and not long before the escalation of involvement in Vietnam, that Robin, Kid Flash, and Aqualad huddled to read a letter purportedly written to a town from which all the 13-to-19-year-olds had disappeared:

All us cats decided to skip
Until adults to the music got hip!
Build a new clubhouse!
Hatton Corners Teens

"Fellows, that note's a phony!" announced Robin. "No teen-ager would use the word 'music' in a hip language message . . . They'd use 'jive'! And that barn was wrecked by some terrific wind!" With that bit of advice, the three junior super-heroes prepared for their first experience as an ad hoc super-team.

That was the way the Teen Titans began.

They didn't have a team name yet. The comic was *The Brave and the Bold* #54, June-July 1964, and the logo simply read "*The Brave and the Bold presents Kid Flash, Aqualad and Robin.*" Super-hero teams were fewer than they are nowadays, and, like their mentors (The Justice League some 24 issues previously), the team somehow clicked. It was a bit slow in the clicking, taking just under two years to win its own book. It was cancelled twice and revived twice, and wound up with almost as many members as The Avengers. But, even with founding member Aqualad gone, *The New Teen Titans* has become one of the biggest-selling DC titles of all and the winner of that coveted label, "fan-favorite."

It's taken 20 years for the Titans to get there — so long you'd expect the Teen to be dropped from the title. But *Teen Titans* has a nice alliterative ring, and, maybe more importantly, it allows younger readers to identify with these world-beating super-types who don't need grown-ups around to show them the ropes. Robin refused Batman's offer of help in issue #1 ("Not at all, Bruce! This is one thing I can handle by myself!"), and that theme was continued through much of the series.

But that would come only in 1980, 16 years after the Titans' debut. So let us return to *The Brave and the Bold* #54, and set the stage. Back in 1964, Batman wasn't yet the permanent host in *B&B* (that would only occur after the 1966 TV show) and each issue featured a brand-new teaming of DC heroes, usually derived from the Justice League membership.

This time, scripter Bob Haney decided on a three-way team-up between the proteges of Batman, The Flash, and Aquaman, and artist Bruno Premiani, who had worked on the *Doom Patrol*, was the capable illustrator.

For a second-string DC comic in 1964, it wasn't bad at all, though some plot elements resembled a Fifties "teen-agers-vs.-the-monsters-from-space" movie. On the cover, Robin stolidly dragged a kayoed Kid Flash and Aqualad to safety, while a maniac in colonial dress rode a small tornado. Clutching a magic staff, he cackled that, since the two super-powered youths had failed to stop him, Robin didn't stand a chance! Famous last words, those. But we still had to wade through 25 thrill-packed pages to find out how he'd get toppled from his windy perch.

As it happened, the conflict in Hatton Corners was meant to be a classic example of the Generation Gap, highlighted by the fact that the town's mayor, Mr. Corliss, led the adult faction, and the kids were spearheaded by his own son, Eddie. The youth-age confrontation was underscored by the adult superheroes, Batman ("Those Hatton Corners teen-agers are acting like spoiled brats!"), Flash ("What's with those teen-agers, Kid Flash? Why can't they behave themselves?"), and Aquaman ("Young people shouldn't dispute with their elders!"). Nonetheless, the three Old Fogey figures grudgingly gave their young aides permission to help settle the dispute through negotiation.

The three young super-heroes had to cope with a tornado-riding "Mr. Twister," who had kidnapped Hatton Corners' teen-agers. Not satisfied with that, he threatened to destroy the town. By story's end, though, the teen-agers were rescued, and a grateful Mayor Corliss vowed to build the biggest teen clubhouse the town had ever seen. Happy ending time.

For whatever reason, the concept succeeded. Most likely, it worked for the same reason The Justice League and The Avengers worked: Combine popular heroes into a new team book and you'll have a sure-fire hit.

Combine popular heroes into a new team book and you'll have a sure-fire hit.

It took another year for the follow-up to arrive, but, when it did, Robin, Kid

Flash, Aqualad and new arrival Wonder Girl were teamed on the cover against a puffy-skinned giant wading hip-deep through the sea. The menace was The Separated Man, the comic was *The Brave and the Bold* #60, and the team was called The Teen Titans.

The creative team was, once again, Haney and Premiani. Wonder Girl was added as a token female. She presented a knotty problem in herself. According to the version of Wonder Woman then current, Wonder Girl was actually Wonder Woman herself as a teen-ager, just as Wonder Tot was the Amazing Amazon as a pre-teener. All three "ages" of Wonder Woman frequently teamed up in fantasy adventures, somewhat akin to teaming Superboy, Superbaby, and Superman without the benefit of time-travel. This was Wonder Girl's first crossover into the mainstream DC universe, and many a fan wondered about the continuity hassles implicit therein.

It was finally revealed, four years after this issue, that Wonder Girl had been orphaned by a fire which killed her parents. Wonder Woman had saved her, taking her to Paradise Island where she was given Amazon powers by the mysterious Purple Ray. She later took the alias of Donna Troy and remained on Earth when the Amazons left in 1969, becoming a junior version of the karate-chopping Wonder Woman who appeared in *Wonder Woman* #179-211.

In *B&B* #60, the four young heroes were once again called in by a town's teen-age population (this time in Midville) to defeat The Separated Man, a gigantic being with the power to split off parts of his body (like the 1966 version of Captain Marvel, after the original Fawcett version and before Marvel Comics' various versions of characters with the same name).

The troubled teen-ager this time was Eddie Holmes, whose father, a scientist, had become the original Separated Man and was jailed for going berserk under the influence of the serum. The story set a "teen-heroes-help-troubled-teens" pattern that was followed in many later issues.

The team's third try-out, "The Return of the Teen Titans," ran only four months later in the more prestigious *Showcase*.

This time, the villains were three super-villains who imitated three gimmicky rock musicians, the Flips (a surfer, a cheerleader, and a motorcyclist) to frame their legal counterparts for the crimes they committed.

The artist on this issue was Nick Cardy, formerly a DC romance artist, whose pleasant, low-key style was associated with most issues of the *Titans* through 1973, when their first run ended. (He pencilled most of the issues and usually inked the rest.)

Two months later, the Titans had their own book, wherein they faced South American patron Don Matanzas and his shape-changing pawn, "The Beast-God of Xochatan!"

The Teen Titans, in their Haney-Cardy incarnations, were never first-line superstars. Haney was a competent formula writer who reached his peak some years later in a few excellent Batman *Brave and the Bold* team-ups, but he had a tin ear for teen-aged dialect and apparently learned the lingo from too many watchings of *Dobie Gillis*. You could hardly find a page without a "groovy!" or a "freaky!"

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Before long, the advent of the campy, super-popular *Batman* TV show led to an attempt to camp the book into tongue-in-cheek heroics, with special emphasis given to Robin on the covers in a ploy to grab Batman addicts. In the next year or so, Robin and company faced down such worthies as Garn (a "million-year-old teen-ager"), Ding-Dong Daddy Dowd (a criminal motorcyclist), the Mad Mod (a villainous boutique operator), and Honey Bun (a robot jungle fighter). The pre-camp readers dropped the book or gritted their teeth and hung on.

There were a few good stories during this period, as always. Issue #6 prophetically showcased Beast Boy, the green-skinned youth from the Doom Patrol, who tried out for the Titans but couldn't get in. His mean old guardian, Galtry, wouldn't let him. As Changeling, he is one of the members of The New Teen Titans. Green Arrow's aide, Speedy, also made some guest appearances.

It was hard to see sometimes how heroes with their considerable power and experience could get decked so often by second-rate villains, but they got trounced by Hell's Angels rejects and ogre-like adult criminals pretty regularly. (Kid Flash was able to move faster than the speed of light. But he was kicked into unconsciousness by the huge Captain Tiger, who moved at about the speed of a rapid pachyderm.)

Haney and editor George Kashdan were more familiar with non-powered groups, like The Sea Devils, The Blackhawks, and The Challengers of the Unknown. Their versions of Robin and Kid Flash were different from the capable kids handled in books edited by Julius Schwartz and written by the likes of John Broome and Gardner Fox.

Before long, though, Dick Giordano, fresh from a revolutionary stint at Charlton Comics, had taken over the Titans' magazine. Under his editorship, creator Haney was replaced by a succession of writers and appeared only infrequently until 1971. Nick Cardy became semi-regular inker until issue #25.

The original Teen Titans hit their most fertile period during this time. Giordano, on his first solely edited issue, #18, accepted the first story written by Len Wein and Marv Wolfman, "Eye of the Beholder." With art by *Phantom Stranger* mainstay Bill Draut, Russia's teen-age superhero, Starfire, made his debut in that issue.

Starfire, alias Leonid Kovar, had been endowed with slightly greater-than-normal speed, strength, and endurance, but both he and the Titans were all thumbs against a black-costumed international jewel thief named Andre LeBlanc. (The baddie took his name from an artist who had been one of Will Eisner's assistants on *The Spirit*.) The story ended with a plea for Russian-American friendship, like a Gardner Fox "morality piece" for *The Justice League*.

Then, Mike Friedrich stepped in with artists Gil Kane and Wally Wood for what may have been the best-drawn story of all, "Stepping Stones for a Giant-Killer!" (#19). Punch, a bespectacled teen-aged genius who dressed in a

clown costume, had been rejected from Headmaster Mind's Academy For Super-Villains because of lack of experience. Smarting like any other job applicant, Punch vowed to prove his worth by assassinating the Teen Titans. He lost after 23 action-filled pages, but he had our sympathies.

In this issue, Speedy finally joined the Titans full-time; he was more adaptable than Aqualad, who, like his mentor in the JLA, was too limited to aquatic menaces to be much use in a team. Besides, Steve Skeates and Jim Aparo were about to begin the year-long quest for Mera in *Aquaman*. The Titans became a more tightly bound unit, and Aqualad would be seen only on rare occasions until the 1976 revival.

Between *Teen Titans* #19 and 20, the four junior heroes teamed with Batman in the excellent "Punish Not My Evil Son!" in *The Brave and the Bold* #83. (Bruce Wayne gained another foster son, who proved to be an agent working to undermine Wayne Enterprises. Robin got his allies to help him in trying to expose the malefactor.)

Neal Adams, possibly the best artist this side of Jack Kirby in 1969, began a three-issue tenure on *Teen Titans* with #20. Adams was writer and penciller, with Nick Cardy handling the inking. The white-costumed Joshua, a Moon Knight-style hero with gimmicky electronic gadgetry, broke into the Titans' HQ with a jack-in-the-box for a decoy. Gaining their trust, he alerted the four teens to a riot that was to take place outside a jail in which a protester had been incarcerated. At story's end, the white-clad hero left, never to be seen again in any comic.

Enter The Hawk and The Dove in issue #21. These two teen heroes (created by Steve Ditko and sustained by Steve Skeates and Gil Kane) were brothers, Hank and Don Hall, who had been granted amplified strength by a mysterious "Voice." The Hawk, like his 1968-pro-Vietnam War namesakes, was aggressive and pugnacious, a feathered fury; The Dove was a pacifist who tried to solve things without violence, usually being beaten in the process. (In *Hawk and Dove* #5, however, he became a fighting fury whose violence even stunned The Hawk when he thought his brother had been killed.)

In their first appearance with The Titans, they helped the fighting foursome battle aliens. At the end of the issue, Hawk and Dove ran off just as they automatically switched to their civilian identities; Robin and Kid Flash had been captured by the aliens; and only Speedy and Wonder Girl remained to fight. The aliens offered their young captives a piece of the action if they finked on their teammates, but Robin retorted, "You can take your offer and shove it in your perverberated schizo-deviated, parabolic, addle-pated, degaussing — Arrgh!" (The green-skinned villains administered a little shock therapy.)

In the next episode, Robin, Kid Flash, Wonder Girl, and Speedy battled the aliens and a horde of monster allies in a red-colored intermediate dimension, until the "only thinking entity" of that realm combined into a giant energy-bowman and drove the bad guys back home. Then he returned The Titans to Earth-One, vowing, "Beings from Dimension X will never again take this pathway to your world. Peace!" "Peace, baby!" confirmed soul-brother Robin.

Issue #22 was filled out with the untold origin of Wonder Girl by Wolfman, Gil Kane, and Cardy. Then Bob Haney stepped back into script the next two issues for Kane and Cardy.

But a big change was in the wind, which shifted abruptly in issue #25. On the cover, overseeing the shrouded body of a dead man, Superman, Aquaman, Green Lantern, Flash, Batman, and Green Arrow faced their four young counterparts. "The greatest man of our time . . ." said Batman. "And you killed him!" declared Superman, jabbing an accusing finger at the Titans.

The story was the work of Nick Cardy and new scripter Bob Kanigher. "The Titans Kill a Saint?" was dramatic but choppy with too many time-jumps for easy reading, introduced a new Titan, confirmed two other additions to the group, deleted one founding father, guest-starred the aforementioned Justice Leaguers, and set the reshuffled group on a new tack, as non-costumed superhero trainees in the asphalt jungle.

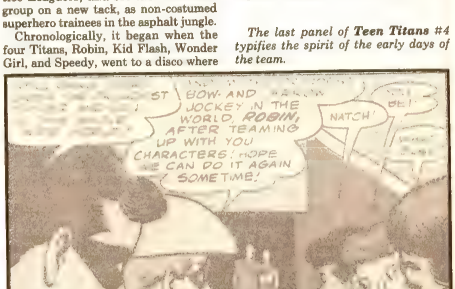
Chronologically, it began when the four Titans, Robin, Kid Flash, Wonder Girl, and Speedy, went to a disco where a part-Chinese girl, Lilith, worked as a go-go dancer. "Spicy! Spicy!" commented Speedy on her gyrations. "Humph!" offered Wonder Girl. After her set, Lilith turned to the civilian-garbed Titans and revealed that she knew their true identities via telepathic power. She also had some limited powers of precognitiion, and revealed that the foursome would cause a killing later on. She also petitioned to join the group, but was rejected.

(We later found out in scattered "untold tales" in issues #36, 38, 41, and 43 that Lilith had been orphaned some years ago and adopted by a Kentucky mountain couple named Clay. She wandered off, joining a carnival, saved a runaway from a band of hoboes and had other sundry adventures before her appearance in issue #25.)

The four Titans attended a peace rally where pacifist leader Arthur Swenson was scheduled to speak. This being an era of student protest and riots, somebody in the audience lobbed a rotten tomato at Swenson. Dick Grayson, Donna Troy, Wally West, and Roy Harper dashed outside to change into their costumes, and met newcomers Hank and Don Hall just as they said their magic words "Hawk!" and "Dove!" Thus were both parties divested of their anonymity, and Hawk and Dove became *de facto* members of the group through #29.

The story involved the murder of Swenson and a change in direction, due to the blame laid on The Titans by the JLA. Wealthy philanthropist Loren Jupiter became The Titans' mentor,

The last panel of ***Teen Titans*** *#4 typifies the spirit of the early days of the team.*


BOW AND
JOCKEY IN THE
WORLD, ROBIN,
AFTER TEAMING
UP WITH YOU
CHARACTERS! HOPE
WE CAN DO IT AGAIN
SOMETIME!
SPEEDY WILL BE BACK LIKE REAL SOON, ALONG WITH
OTHER SUPER-GUEST STARS FROM DC'S FABULOUS
STABLE OF JUNIOR SUPER-HEROES, IN THE SWINGING-
EST BOOK YOU EVER READ...TEEN TITANS!

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NO, YOU'RE NOT SEEING THINGS! THAT'S ROBIN, WONDER GIRL, KID FLASH and AQUALAD ALL FIGHTING THE SAME VILLAIN... The BEAST-GOD of XOCHATAN!

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(Above) The first issue of ***Teen Titans*** *was dated Jan-Feb 1966. (Below) A color rough shows Dick Grayson's new super-identity.*

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and Lilith and Mal Duncan, a black teen, joined the group. Robin went off to college.

Steve Skeates, an alumnus of Dick Giordano's Charlton Comics, signed on as scripter with issue #28 and produced the best-written stories of the original run. His first ploy was to re-introduce a costumed Robin and Aqualad to the cast (on the cover, the Sea King's ally bashed the Boy Wonder in the jaw, yelling, "You're copping out, Robin!") and team them against a genuine super-villain, Ocean Master (Aquaman's brother), in a crossover from *Aquaman* #50-52. Some aliens who had been his allies in that trilogy conspired with Ocean Master and the Dimension X aliens of issues #6 and #s 20-22 for a rip-roaring two-parter that got all The Titans back in their old costumes.

After defeating the villains, Robin, Aqualad, The Hawk, and The Dove left the team and Mal, Wonder Girl, Speedy, Lilith, and Kid Flash were left to carry the torch against two plain-clothes villains in issue #30.

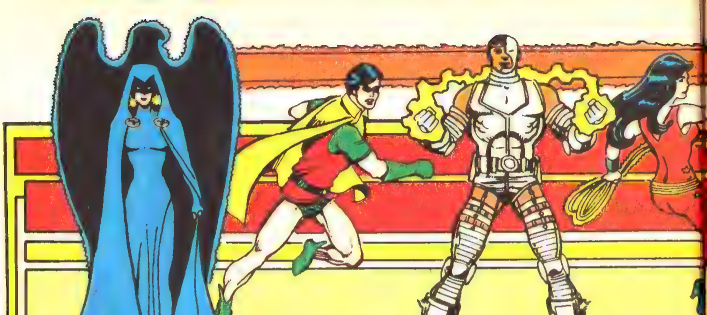
Steve Skeates and George Tuska offered #31's "To Order Is to Destroy," in which Kid Flash and Wonder Girl quelled a student riot at a university. Then, in a two-parter begun by Skeates, finished by a returning Haney, and illustrated by Tuska and Cardy, Robin, Wonder Girl, Lilith, Mal, Kid Flash, Speedy, and an other-worldly Cro-Magnon caveboy named Gnarrk battled mystical counterparts of Mr. Jupiter, Superman, Batman, Flash, Green Arrow, Speedy, and Lilith. In the end, Gnarrk and Lilith became lovers. (She had a thing for the tall, dark, primitive type.) Gnarrk also became a part-time Titan, but appeared only in #39 and then in the "revival" issues, #50-52. At about the same time, The Titans teamed with Batman in *The Brave and the Bold* #74 and with Superman in *World's Finest* #205.

With issue #34, Murray Boltinoff took over from editor Dick Giordano, and Bob Haney was firmly reinstated as the scripter of the rest of the first run of *Teen Titans*. (One Aqualad story written by Skeates also saw print, but this had been done under Giordano. It was never concluded, and probably never will be.) Tuska and Cardy handled the art until #39, when old pro Artie Saaf replaced Tuska as the penciller of the last five issues.

Haney's tales may not have been up to Skeates', but they were much improved over the early "camp" issues and turned up winners as often as not. His teaming of The Titans and Batman, with art by Jim Aparo and Neal Adams, in *Brave and the Bold* #102 was one of the best Titans outings ever.

The Titans rotated members at times, dropping Mal, Speedy, Kid Flash, or Lilith for single issues to keep from crowding the stories. Robin was back to stay. So were the Titans' costumes. Mr Jupiter still hung around, but he was relegated to the background in many issues. Finally, he declared the Titans to be graduates of his program in 1973 and withdrew to the shadows.

The final episodes of the first *Teen Titans* thrust Lilith into the limelight, with spooky, mist-shrouded covers reminescent of DC's *The Witching Hour*. The Titans clobbered a demon-worshiping cult, re-enacted *Romeo and Juliet* in modern Italy, battled the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, under-



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A color rough gives a first glimpse of a new character to become involved with The New Teen Titans

went a surreal adventure in a hallucination of Wonder Girl's, fought an ancient Scottish sorcerer, battled voodoo from the era of Civil War slaves, defeated giant bug-villains, and polished it off with a battle against demons. That issue, #43, finished off the original run of the *Teen Titans*. The comic vanished, and Robin, Speedy, Wonder Girl, and Kid Flash returned to their mentors' books. Mal would not return for some three years, and Lilith and Gnarrk weren't seen for many issues to come.

They'd been in existence for 12 years as teen-agers, just as they are today, but Robin had gone for 36 years as a child and teen without anybody noticing.

It took three years for The Titans to make a comeback. (They'd been in existence for 12 years as teen-agers, just as they are today, but Robin had gone for 36 years as a child and teen without anybody noticing.)

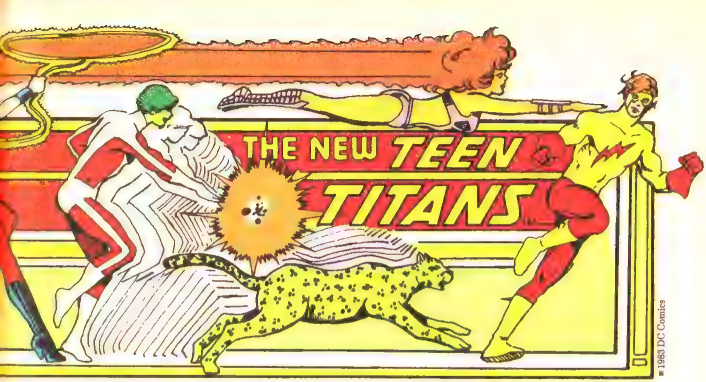
The Teen Titans, second time around, was the product of a DC expansion program which saw many old-time titles, including *Challengers of the Unknown*, *Green Lantern*, and *Blackhawk*, revived — and several new comics, such as *Secret Society of Super-Villains* and *Freedom Fighters*, added.

The second *Teen Titans* lasted for 10 issues under the auspices of editor Julius Schwartz, author Bob Rozakis, and a host of rotating artists, including Pablo Marcos, Irv Novick, Jose Delbo, and Don Heck. Attacks of acute nostalgia led to *Teen Titans* being overcrowded with too many returning heroes; the guest-star syndrome worked against itself. None of the mainstays such as Robin or Wonder Girl exhibited much more personality than a limp dishrag. It lasted for 15 months and was gone, little-mourned.

The final issue was #53, in which Speedy gets to pronounce the team's second obituary:

"We grew up together — helped each other over the rough spots — but now it's time to fly solo . . . so each of us can continue growing! We stifled Aqualad — made him feel inferior — till he got sick because of it and had to quit! We're doing it to each other too, but we just haven't realized it yet, the way fish-face did! And we've outgrown that Teen Titans shtick! We're not a bunch of kids playing super-hero anymore — someday we'll have to replace the Justice League and we've all got to be ready . . . as individuals!" Speedy was the only one to shed a tear as all the rest split off in different directions.

After a brief rebanding to aid Batman in a *Brave and the Bold* story on juvenile crime by Bob Haney and Jim Aparo and a minor role in the colossal gathering of super-stars that was *Showcase* #100, The Titans found grace in the eyes of editor Len Wein, writer Marv Wolfman, and artist George Perez. The first two, of course, had favored the team — one of their earliest scripts had been written for The Titans. And George Perez had proven his worth as a super-team artist by handling *The Inhumans*, *The Avengers*, and *The Fantastic Four* at Marvel. It was time not only to revive The Teen Titans, but



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to revitalize them as well.

The superfluous characters from the Rozakis revival, such as Aqualad, Bumblebee, Harlequin, Golden Eagle, and Guardian, were dropped. The core membership was cut back to the four "originals" — Robin, Wonder Girl, Speedy, and Kid Flash — plus latecomer Beast Boy, renamed Changeling, because he had a vital link to the old Doom Patrol, and there were plans in store along that line. And three all-new heroes were added to give the team some new blood.

Moreover, Wolfman decided to invest the individual Titans with personalities, rather than being content to have them spout current youth slang so that they might be identified with Contemporary Teen-Agers. And so, above the logo of *DC Comics Presents* #26, a headline blared, "Extra! A special free 16-page preview of the *New Teen Titans*!"

The story began with Robin, the focal point of familiarity for the reader, conferring with Gotham police outside a S.T.A.R. lab which was being held by a terrorist. By the fourth panel, Robin went into a trance and awakened with Wonder Girl at his side, outside the spanking-new T-shaped Titans Tower.

"Titans what?" asked the Boy Wonder. "I — I've never been here before in my life!"

The first to greet the newcomers was Beast Boy, who had just changed his name to Changeling ("Beast Boy was nowhere! Changeling has got style! Rhythm! Pizzazz!").

He was joined, in short order, by: Cyborg, a black youth much of whose body had been replaced by metal prostheses; Starfire, a golden-skinned alien girl with flight and fireburst powers; the familiar Kid Flash ("Thank goodness! Someone else I know!"); and Raven, another alien girl with "empathic," pain-removing powers, who appeared in a burst of brimstone.

"Danger lurks in the city of men," she intoned like The Shadow, "brought here by one of your own . . . a man who, in seeking a dream . . . found a nightmare instead . . ." After illuminating a scientist who unleashed an other-dimensional blob through a warpgate, Raven joined the others, who were, of course, The New Teen Titans, in racing to the scene of the crime.

This, and a monster-fighting episode, took place in Robin's mind during his trance, from which he recovered with bewilderment.

After that mysterious build-up, the action resumed in *The New Teen Titans* #1 a few weeks later. Ravan popped up in Dick Grayson's bedroom in a puff of smoke. "I invaded your dreams only so that you may come to know me . . and to know that, when at last, I appeared before you it was to seek your aid!"

Specifically, she sought aid for the golden-skinned Starfire, who had fought her way out of a slaver's starship and made her getaway in a shuttle-craft to Earth. Presumably injured in the landing, she was still being stalked by the slavers.

For the first two issues of *The New Teen Titans*, the heroes faced and solved Starfire's problem — and went on to fight the world's greatest assassin, The Terminator.

Wolfman and Perez had hit the ground running with this title. By #3, it was obvious that the comic book was going to be DC's parallel to *The X-Men*

Nightwing is TM and © 1983 by DC Comics Inc. Used with permission.

Dick Grayson, dropping his Robin identity, will become Nightwing (seen in a color rough) in 1984.

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE...
Remember when criminal masterminds three times Superman the man special at the Peace Rally (TEEN TITANS #28)...
Instead of slamming the gun out of the psychos hand
POW
Our agonized sigh at the hospital ended when...
We were summoned to an emergency meeting of the Justice League at the morgue...
"In the midst of our despair, the legendary Mr. Jupiter, richest man on Earth gave us our chance"
DANGER SURVIVAL COURSE
"The Survival Course was a nightmare that finally ended..."

and have an even more rapid rise. It had taken some two to three years for Marvel's mutants to gain their popular status.

In the course of the third issue, Cyborg — and the readers — were invited to the grand opening of Titans Tower, a T-shaped six-story headquarters with more trademark value than a pair of golden arches.

The problem is — none of The Titans knew who gave it to them. (This is known as a "hook" in the writing trade.)

The interlude occurred in the midst of conflicts and revelations (including Starfire's origin, the defeat of The New Teen Titans by The Fearsome Five, and a premonition in which "Trigon the Terrible" defeated The Justice League and conquered the Earth.)

In issue #4, "Against All Friends!" The Justice League (Batman, Green Lantern, Zatanna, Wonder Woman, Atom, and Hawkman) attempted to stop a triad of sorcerers from completing a spell which, they felt, threatened the entire planet. The Justice Leaguers were subdued by Raven and the magic-makers, and the lady in black is free to contact her mother in the mystic Temple-City of Azarath.

Back at Titans Tower, Raven divulged "at last why the Titans have been formed!" On another dimensional world in the distant past, consumed by inner fires, the mystic-empowered

In ***Teen Titans*** *#27 (May-June 1970) readers were given a reminder of the recent events which had led to a change for the team. Aside from these two views (and a lineup on the cover), the characters' super-hero costumes did not appear in the issue.*

GOOD-BY, EARTH! GOOD-BY TO THE OLD TEEN TITANS--OUR GROOVY UNIFORMS--OUR SUPER-POWERS!
WILL WE EVER BE ABLE TO FORGET THAT WE TITANS WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR "KILLING" A MODERN SAINT DURING THAT RUMBLE AT THE PEACE RALLY?...

© National Periodical Publications, Inc.

inhabitants had performed a blasphemous ceremony and raise an archdemon — "their particular Satan" — to mate with a chosen woman. The product of this union had been Trigon, a red-skinned, stag-antlered fury who slew his mother and "all about him." At age 1, he conquered his planet; at age 6, apparently bored, he destroyed it. "And then he learned of our universe!"

This revelation took place because of The Justice League's incursion against the sorcerers. "And now . . . Trigon will be able to bridge the gulf between dimensions . . . and do to us what he's done to all the others!" finished Raven. Robin, quick-thinking as ever, shouts: "Let's go, Titans! We've got to destroy the Justice League!"

Raven deduced that this was no act of normal adolescent behavior. "They've turned The Titans into mind-controlled assassins!"

A battle between young and old raged inside the Justice League satellite. Artist Perez had a field day on this one, including a funny of Robin enveloping Green Lantern's hand in his yellow cape and a stern Batman informing his ward, "All right, Robin, that's quite enough!"

In the story's course, explanations were exchanged ("First off, we're not kids. We're The Titans — not some junior Justice League."), the JLA heard the reasons for the Teen Titans' reorganization, and Raven admitted manipulating each member of her band in order to bring them together.

On hearing this, the disgruntled Titans walked off, each in a separate direction, distrusting Raven. The JLA also deserted her.

In the next issue, Raven's origin was revealed: She, the daughter of Trigon, was an empath who could draw another's pain onto herself, curing the sufferer, and then disperse the agony after experiencing it herself.

The Titans, acting in concert, finally forced Trigon through a dimensional warp, and Raven's mother followed to bar him from re-entering the Earth-One universe. So ended The Titans' origin epic, some six-and-a-half issues in the telling.

Issue #7 featured a reprise battle with The Fearsome Five, and, at long last, the secret of Titans' Tower: It had been built by Cyborg's estranged and dying father as a gift to his son. The story involved the reconciliation between the two, with the father-son bond restored, and the pair spent their final two months together in constant companionship until the end, in a scene reminiscent of Clark Kent's last moments with his dying foster-father, Jonathan Kent.

The New Teen Titans #8 followed with "A Day In the Lives," an entertaining series of vignettes which saw Starfire becoming, of all things, the latest teen-age jeans model, Donna Troy as big-league fashion photographer, Raven separating her soul-self from her body, exceeding her time-limit for separation by saving a school from terrorist bombings and then having to find her way back "home" through a purgatory of mystic dimensions, Changeling and Cyborg getting together, Wally West being recognized as a "man" by his parents in Blue Valley, and, finally, a Ten Little Indians murder plot wherein executives of Dayton Industries (Gar Logan's inherited firm) are being shot to death one-by-one by — puppets. The culprit proved to be The Puppeteer, formerly The Puppet Master from *Green Lantern* #1 with a name-change to avoid conflict with the Marvel villain.

The Doom Patrol, who appeared in the Sixties in their own comic, had been destroyed as a team. In *NTT* #10-#15, the group finally was avenged. Robotman and Mento (Changeling's foster father) joined forces with The Titans, led by Changeling, and mounted an all-out attack on the African fortress of the villains Madame Rouge and Captain Zahl. In the end, Mento, Robotman, and Changeling strode from the site of battle arm-in-arm, the shades of the slain members of The Doom Patrol — The Chief, Negative Man, and Elasti-Girl — symbolically at their backs.

The New Teen Titans made several appearances in other titles. Two were in *The Best of DC* #8 and in *Wonder Woman* #287. The first, a Wolfman/Carmine Infantino collaboration, brought back Speedy and Aqualad for an excellent 12-page battle beside their old allies. The second, by Wolfman and Don Heck, teamed The Titans and Wonder Woman against her arch-foe Doctor Cyber in a regulation punch-out. Because of the guest-shots, both comics are bound to rocket in price.

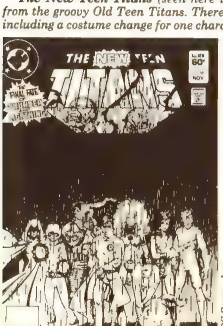
Another Titans appearance, in a three-part *Wonder Woman* story by Roy Thomas and Gene Colan, was an uneven effort that teamed the Amazon with every heroine in the DC multiverse, including Raven, Wonder Girl, and Starfire.

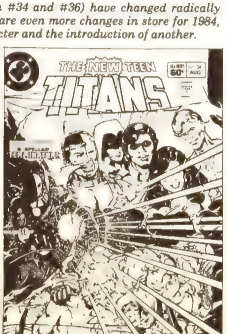
Tales of The New Teen Titans, a DC mini-series, investigated the life stories of Cyborg, Changeling, Starfire, and Raven. Because of their narrowed focus, the books were more easily read than most of the multi-hero Titans epics.

1982's issues of *The New Teen Titans* were built mainly around two major menaces: Brother Blood and Blackfire. Brother Blood's menace took the form of a cultish religion in issue #21. Like many evil cults, its members killed transgressors in various imaginative ways. Brother Blood himself sat atop a throne of skulls and was said to have lived more than 700 years. He possessed energy powers and had believers in all strata of society, making it very hard for The Titans to crack down on him. (The sequence was reminiscent of Wolfman's excellent "Church of Satan" sequence in Marvel's *Tomb of Dracula*) Given Brother Blood's affiliation with The New Brotherhood of Evil, the story-line promises an exciting denouement in the issues to come.

Blackfire, alias Komand'r, Starfire's sister, showed up in the closing pages of *NTT* #22 and initiated a four-issue war

The New Teen Titans *(seen here in #34 and #36) have changed radically from the groovy Old Teen Titans. There are even more changes in store for 1984, including a costume change for one character and the introduction of another.*





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of vengeance against Koriand'r which climaxed in *New Teen Titans Annual* #1, with a vicious hand-to-hand fight. Along the way, The Titans and The Omega Men conducted a war against the Gordanians, the aliens of the Citadel Homeworld and their leader, the Idi Amin-esque Lord Damyn. It ended with the sacrifice of a goddess to save 300 worlds. For many fans, this remains the high point of the *New Teen Titans* series.

And the rest? Issues #26 and #27 were the famed "Runaways" issues, dealing with three youths on the run from intolerable home situations, and the evil they ran into on the way; #28 focused on Terra, the newest Titan, a girl with earth-shaping powers; The Brotherhood of Evil was back with issues #29-31, which brought Speedy back into the fold; a pair of half-Vietnamese super-youths, Thunder and Lightning, appeared in a two-parter for #32 and 33; and a story which began in #34 and climaxed in *New Teen Titans Annual* #2 introduced The Vigilante, a District-Attorney-turned-Executioner who blew away master criminals with a submachine gun. (The Vigilante began his own series in mid-1983.)

There was a massive team-up with Superman and The Justice League of America in *Action Comics*, another Wolfman-written title; and The Titans teamed in a two-parter with Batman and the Outsiders in their own book and in *Batman and the Outsiders*. In November 1982, The Titans appeared in a crossover with Marvel's leading super-group, The X-Men.

In the 1984-dated books, Kid Flash decided to quit the super-hero business

Dick Grayson, dropping his Robin identity, will shortly become Nightwing (seen in a color rough elsewhere) in 1984.

The Cost of Collecting:

	Good	Fine	Mint
BRAVE AND THE BOLD, THE			
Aug-Sept. 1955 — No. 200, July, 1982			
National Periodical Publications/DC Comics			
54-Kid Flash, Robin & Aqualad; 1st app./origin Teen Titans	2.50	7.50	15.00
60-Teen Titans	1.70	5.00	10.00
83-Batman-Teen Titans; Adams-a	2.00	6.00	12.00
94-Batman-Teen Titans	.50	1.50	3.00
102-Batman-Teen Titans; Adams-a (p)	.50	1.50	3.00
149-Batman-Teen Titans; Aparo-a	—	.60	1.20
DC COMICS PRESENTS			
July-Aug, 1978 — Present DC Comics			
26-(10/80)-Superman/Green Lantern, intro Cyborg, Starfire, Raven, New Teen Titans; Sturiano/a	2.00	6.00	12.00
DC SUPER-STARS			
March, 1976 — No. 18, Winter, 1978 (No. 3-18: 52 pgs.)			
National Periodical Publications/DC Comics			
1 Teen Titans (68 pgs.)	.35	1.00	2.00
NEW TEEN TITANS, THE (See DC Comics Presents No. 26) November, 1980 — Present DC Comics			
1-Robin, Kid Flash, Wonder Girl, The Changeling, Starfire, The Raven, Cyborg begin; partial origin	2.50	7.50	15.00
2	1.50	4.50	9.00
3-Origin Starfire, Intro The Fearsome 5	1.25	3.75	7.50
4-Origin continues; I.L.A. app.	1.25	3.75	7.50
5-10: 6-Raven origin. 7-Cyborg origin. 8-Origin Kid Flash retold. 10-Origin Changeling retold	.70	2.00	4.00
11, 12	.45	1.25	2.50
13-15: 13-Return of Madame Rouge & Capt. Zahl. 14-Return of Mento; origin Doom Patrol. 15-Death of Madame Rouge & Capt. Zahl	.35	1.00	2.00
16-1st app. Capt. Carrot	.40	1.20	2.40
17-18: 18-Return of Starfire	.25	.75	1.50
20-Marv Wolfman & George Perez kidnapped in story	.25	.75	1.50
21-28; 21-Intro The Night Force. 23-1st app. Vigilante	.60	1.20	
Annual 1 (11/82); Perez c/a	.35	1.00	2.00
NOTE: Perez a-1-4p, 6-28pi c-1-13, 14p-28p.			
NEW TEEN TITANS, THE			
3-4/56 — No. 93, 9/70; No. 94, 9/77 — No. 104, 9/78			
National Periodical Publications/DC Comics			
59-Teen Titans	2.00	6.00	12.00
NIGHT FORCE, THE			
June, 1982 — No. 4, Sept. 1982			
DC Comics			
1-Origin Cyborg-book length story	.25	.75	1.50
2-Origin Raven-book length story	.25	.75	1.50
3-Origin Changeling	—	.50	1.00
4-Origin Starfire	—	.50	1.00
NOTE. Perez a-1, 2, 3p, 4p; c-1-4.			
TEEN TITANS (See Brave & the Bold, DC Super-Stars No. 1, New Adv. of, and Showcase)			
1-2/66 — No. 43, 1-2/73; No. 44, 11/76 — No. 53, 2/78			
National Periodical Publicatoens/DC Comics			
1-Titans join peace corps; Batman, Flash, Aquaman, Wonder Woman cameos	5.00	15.00	30.00
2	2.00	6.00	12.00
3-5: 4-Speedy app.	1.00	3.00	6.00
6-10	.70	2.00	4.00
11-18; 11-Speedy app.	.50	1.50	3.00
19-Wood-a; Speedy begins as regular	.50	1.50	3.00
20-22: All Adams-a; 21-Hawk & Dove app. 22-Origin Wonder Girl	1.00	3.00	6.00

entirely, Dick Grayson decided to stop being Robin and take a new costumed identity as Nightwing, and Terra — unknown to The Titans — turned out to be a villain, a spy working with The Terminator. And Cyborg did a guest shot in *The Vigilante #2* and Changeling appeared in *Captain Carrot and His Amazing Zoo Crew.*

That's the story as it stands at this writing.

What can be said of The New Teen Titans, in retrospect? Wolfman and Perez have produced an excellent comic book. It's a success many times over and has grabbed many cross-over readers from Marvel, particularly from readers of *The X-Men,* whom The Titans superficially resemble. (The fact that they've co-starred together in a cross-company team-up book hasn't hurt things, either.) All in all, they're one of the best new super-groups around.

But, as good as today's Titans are, I can't help but look back at some of the stories by Bob Haney and Steve Skeates and appreciate them all the more for their simplicity and characterization.

The Old Teen Titans were four teen-aged crimebusters with powers only slightly greater than the norm. They coped with situations a bit closer to home than Trigon — that is, if you discount aliens from another dimension and the Beast-God of Xochotan. And while I commend heartily the flawless professional art of George Perez, I still enjoy the pleasant, soft-edged graphics of Nick Cardy, especially when paired with Neal Adams or Gil Kane.

The New Teen Titans is a best-seller, and a fan favorite — and deservedly so.

But, will it be as fondly remembered, 10 years from now, as I recall the *old* Teen Titans?

The multitudes of comics readers who eagerly look forward to each issue of *The New Teen Titans* would certainly say "Yes!"

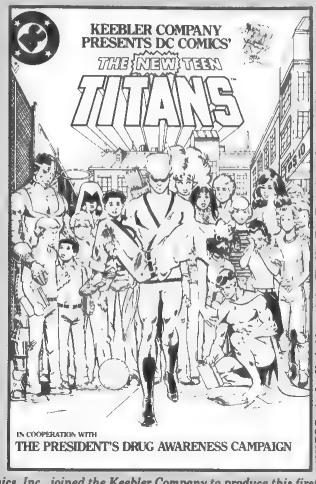
23-Wonder Girl dons new costume	.40	1.20	2.40
24	.40	1.20	2.40
25-Flash, Aquaman, Batman, Green Arrow, Green Lantern, Superman, & Hawk & Dove guests	.40	1.20	2.40
26-30: 29-Hawk & Dove & Ocean Master app. 30-Aquagirl app.	.40	1.20	2.40
31-43: 31-Hawk & Dove app. 36, 37-Superboy-r. 38-Green Arrow/Speedy-r; Aquaman/Aqualad story. 39-Hawk & Dove story. (36-39, 52 pgs.)	.90	1.80	
44-47, 49-52: 44-Mal becomes the Guardian. 46-Joker's Daughter begins. 50-Intro. Teen Titans West. 1st revival original Bat-Girl	.60	1.20	
48 Intro Bumblebee; Joker's Daughter becomes Harlequin	.60	1.20	
53-Origin retold	.60	1.20	

NOTE: Anderson a-30. Ayers a-36. Buckler c-46-53.

WORLD'S FINEST COMICS (World's Best No. 1)
No. 2, Summer, 1941 — Present (early issues-100 pgs.)
National Periodical Publ /DC Comics (No. 1-20 cardboard covers)

207-Teen Titans app.	.60	1.20	

TEEN TITANS FIGHT DRUGS



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† indicates a trademark of the Keebler Company.

DC Comics, Inc., joined the Keebler Company to produce this first in a series of anti-drug-abuse comics designed to reach a grade-school audience. School systems who want to use the comics can contact DC Comics, Inc.

By Kim Metzger

1983 saw the publication of a very special *Teen Titans* book. It made its debut, not on newsstands, but as part of a kit distributed to schools around the country. The kit was co-produced by DC Comics, Inc., and the Keebler Company for use in President Reagan's drug awareness campaign. Its goal was to inform schoolchildren (in particular, fourth graders) about the dangers of drug abuse.

"The idea for the book began approximately in the fall of 1982," said Marv Wolfman, scripter for the regular *Teen Titans* book as well as this one. "Steve Jacobs, a special consultant for the U.S. Customs Bureau, approached us first about the comic.

"They'd done a comic book before with Campbell Soup and Marvel about energy-saving that used Captain America," Wolfman said. "They felt a comic book was a good way of reaching others."

Originally, the head of the White House drug program approached DC because he had wanted to use one of their better-known characters such as Superman, Batman, or Wonder Woman. But those characters were tied up in other projects at the time. Instead, DC recommended *The New Teen Titans,* the company's best-selling title. The program heads were shown Wolfman's two-issue story dealing with run-away children and were impressed. Best of all, they realized The Titans would appeal most strongly to the age group they wished to reach.

"The book was intended to address the young," said Karin Lippert, public relations director for DC. "Teen-agers are likely to be the role model for that age group. In fact, many of the young children who started on drugs did so because their older brothers or sisters were doing drugs."

Anyone wishing further information on the program should contact Karin Lippert at DC Comics Inc., 666 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10103. She can be reached by phone at (212) 484-2820.

The second anti-drug comic book, sponsored by the National Soft Drink Association, won't be published for comics shops. School systems will be distributing the issue.

After it was decided to use The Teen Titans, Wolfman was approached to write the book. He was interested in the project, in spite of having almost no knowledge of the causes and effects of drug abuse. To overcome this problem, Wolfman attended a meeting in New York with several people, including former drug users who were involved with private programs. He was given more than thirty different pamphlets, books, and slides on the subject. And he went to various organizations, detoxification centers, and a psychiatric ward.

"It was an incredible eye-opener for me," Wolfman said, "one of the most gut-wrenching experiences I've ever been through. At the psychiatric ward, there was a 13-year-old girl who'd been drinking since she was 8. Her father wanted someone to drink with, so he started giving her alcohol. Later, he wanted someone to do drugs with, so she was started on them.

"Her eyes were completely blank, without any feeling at all. She would answer questions and talk to us very freely. The saddest and most terrifying moment to me came when I asked her if there was anything she thought we could do to keep others off of drugs. She said we should tell them her life story. I then asked if that would've kept her from using drugs. She said it probably wouldn't have.

"Another person at the ward was a 23-year-old man who'd found his two-year-old son going through the motions of using a syringe because he'd seen Daddy doing it."

Wolfman also attended a six-hour indoctrination session at Straight, an organization that tries to help users kick the habit. There, Wolfman saw the format he would use in the book. Drug-users sat so that they faced their parents. The users would take turns standing and telling their stories. Then the parents would have a turn to speak. Similarly, throughout the book's story, pages are turned over to the users to tell their stories, with one main difference.

"At the session, the kids would give this incredibly long list of the drugs they'd used, some of which I'd never even heard of before. I figured no one would believe me, if I listed all the drugs they mentioned, so I cut the list down to, at the most, five or six drugs for each user.

"It was very tense. Some of the parents were angry. When it was over (the users aren't allowed to leave until they've put in six hours), one boy jumped up and yelled 'I'm free!'"

As a result of this experience, Wolfman himself felt a strong sense of outrage when he began to write the book. "I used some language in the book I wish I hadn't, calling some of the dealers 'punks' and 'scum.' And I had to be careful to tone down the violence in the book."

There is some violence in the comic, but it's a lot quieter than what appears in some other comic books putlished today. "President Reagan saw the book before it went out and asked about the violence. We showed him some of the comics on the stands today, and he let it pass. We tend to forget sometimes how violent other comics are today."

One problem cropped up with the book as Wolfman and *Titans* artist George Perez began work on it: Robin, the leader of The Teen Titans, couldn't be used. "This book was being sponsored by Keebler, and Robin was already licensed by Nabisco. So I came up with a new character, The Protector. We already had the art done, so Dave Manak did all the corrections to turn Robin into The Protector. He looks pretty much as I envisioned him, except where his costume is purple, I had originally wanted black."

When the book was published, DC printed a million copies. They were distributed, 30 to a kit, to schools around the nation. "We had tests done with the books," Wolfman said. "I was concerned I might have written over the heads of the target group, fourth graders. But we found they understood perfectly what had happened in the book." The response was so good, a second million copies were published to meet the demand and there were even editions for foreign countries.

Wolfman then began to consider the possibility of publishing an edition for the direct-sales market. He knew that since it had been produced by the regular *Titans* team of artist George Perez and himself, comics fans would want it, too. He was worried fans might try to get the book from the schools, thus taking it out of the hands of children, something he didn't want.

DC shared his feelings and printed an edition for comic book shops. (The only difference between the direct-sales version and the one published for the program is that the edition sold in shops has a price on it and a banner at the bottom of the cover.) Profits went to the Youth Rescue Fund and the National Federation of Parents for Drug-Free Youth, two anti-drug organizations.

Encouraged by the success of the program, more issues are being planned. A second has recently been published, this time with sixth-graders as its target. "This one is a little quieter in tone, since it was written five months after I had my experience with Straight," said Wolfman. "It has some very strong sequences, though, like a scene of two kids on the floor trying to snort up some cocaine that had fallen on it."

Although the second book is sponsored by the National Soft Drink Association, Wolfman decided to continue using The Protector rather than Robin. "The Protector has become a symbol of the drug program. I want to keep using him in the books."

The second book will not be published for comic-book stores, which has Wolfman a little concerned again about collectors. "I wish DC would print it, but they don't want to overdo it. By the time it would appear in comic shops, there will be two *Teen Titans* books on the market (one on newsstands, one for direct sales only) DC doesn't want to saturate the market with *Titans* books."

Perez is not the artist on the second issue, due to prior commitments. That may lessen demand among collectors. The art was handled by Ross Andru, who has worked in the field for years, drawing *Wonder Woman*, *Superman*, and *Spider-Man*, among others. His pencils were inked by Joe Giella.

A third issue is also in the works, sponsored by IBM. Wolfman, however, is only plotting this one because of demands on his time.

Wolfman intends to do his best to discourage collectors from trying to get these books. "At conventions, I try to make it a practice not to autograph copies not bought at shops. I hope they're not taken out of the hands of the kids."

QUICKSILVER'S LAMENT
BAH!
FRED HEMBECK
HOW IS IT THAT I, QUICKSILVER, MUTANT MASTER OF SPEED, AM SHUNTED AWAY ON THE MOON WITH MY WIFE, OUR CHILD, AND HER RACE, THE INHUMANS? SHOULD I NOT BE ON EARTH LAPPING UP THE GLORY A MAN OF MY PRIMEVIS DESERVES? AM I NOT AN EX-AVENGER OF LONG STANDING? AM I NOT A SEMINAL LEE AND KIRBY CREATION? AM I, NOT--
PIETRO, PIETRO, PIETRO.....
FLASH?!?
"AM YOU NOT INTERESTING. NOVELTY AM NOT FACE. IT FALL. YOU'RE BORING.
LOOK, I'M NOT GETTING DOWN ON YOU JUST BECAUSE YOU STOLE MY GIG--THERE'S ROOM FOR A DOZEN SPEEDSTERS IN COMICS AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, BUT WE'RE JUST NOT IMAGINED IT. YOU HAD EXCELLENT CREDENTIALS IN THE SIXTIES AND IN FACT DIDN'T DO TOO BADLY DURING THAT DECADE. BUT AS SOON AS YOU LEFT THE AVENGERS IN THE EARLY SEVENTIES, YOU'RE BECAME LITTLE MORE THAN A MEMORY IN THE MARVEL UNIVERSE.
YOU'VE NEVER HAD YOUR OWN SERIES, YOU'VE NEVER GUEST STARRED WITH SPIDER-MAN OR THE THING IN THEIR TEAM-UP TITLES, WHEN YOU'RE MEMBER EVEN HAD A 6 PAGE PICK-UP STRIP HANDLED BY MARVEL-APPROVED(SO!) IN FACE, YOUR BIGGEST CLAIM TO FAME WAS BEING FEATURED IN AN ISSUE OF YOUR SISTER AND BROTHER-IN-LAW'S MIND-SERIES? A PRETTY PATHETIC CAREER, WOULDN'T YOU AGREE, CRYSTAL? DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHY THAT MIGHT BE?
YOU... TELL... ME...
ACTUALLY I THINK I'D LET MAGNY TELL YOU.
IT'S THE WAY YOU DRESS, QUICKSILVER, OL' BUDDY!
KID FLASH?!?
LOOK, I'LL ADMIT I'M PARTIAL TO THE LIGHTNING BOLT MOTIF, BUT I'M AFRAID THE COLORS OF YOUR COSTUME IS ALL WRONG.
THAT'S RIGHT, KIDDO!
JOHNNY QUICK?!
WHEW! FOR A SEC. SEE US SUPER-SPEEDSTERS, THEY WANT TO SEE RED AND YELLOW BLURS. THOSE TWO COLORS TRANSLATE INTO "BEST" FOR OUR ADORING PUBLIC. BUT LIGHT BLUE?! WHO WANTS TO SEE A LIGHT BLUE BLUR??
SO WHAT YOU FELLOWS ARE SAYING IS THAT IF I CHANGE MY UNIFORM TO RED AND YELLOW, I'LL BE A SUCCESS?
QUICKSILVER, IF YOU START WEARING THE MORE TRADITIONAL COLORS, IT'LL CHANGE YOUR LIFE. I GUARANTEE IT.
ALL RIGHT, I'LL DO IT!
GOOD
heh heh.
WELL, HOW DO YOU LIKE IT?
NOT BAD, BUT HERE'S THE FELLOW YOU SHOULD REALLY BE SHOWING IT TO.
OH? WHO'S ME? YOUR TAILOR?
NO, OUR LAWYER.
YOUR LAWYER?!?
I'M AFRAID YOUR SUPER-SPEED DAYS ARE OVER, MR. QUICKSILVER. YOU APPEAR TO BE TOO CLOSE A CONCERN OF MY THREE CLIENTS HERE TO BE PERMITTED TO CONTINUE RUNNING ABOUT.
NOW HOLD ON JUST A MINUTE--I CAN EXPLAIN!
SAVE IT FOR THE JUDGE.
WELL--IT TOOK TWENTY YEARS, BUT THAT FINALLY TAKES CARE OF HIM.
SAY, I HEAR THE F.B.I. AGENTS ARE BACK IN ACTION
UH-OH. TIME TO STRIKE LIGHTNING.

I Remember . . .

VANDOOM,

Master of Marvel Monsters

By Will Murray

There were giants in those days, back around 1962 — real giants, and their names were Titan, Oog, Grottu, Diablo, Shagg, Fin Fang Foom, Lee, Kirby, and Ditko. They roamed the four-colored forests of *Tales of Sus-*

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pense, Journey into Mystery, Strange Tales, and *Tales to Astonish* with impunity, towering over their peers, hurling their bombastic challenges to a frightened, insignificant humanity, until, one by one, they died out. these atomic dinosaurs, supplanted by the new masters of the comic book jungle, the super-heroes.

It was an older, more simple time — before *Star Wars*, before *Conan the Barbarian*, yes, even before the fabled Marvel Age of Comics.

It is a half-forgotten era unto itself, long after the Golden Age of Comics, which might be called the Marvel Age of Monsters. Of its glory I will sing.

Of course, Marvel Comics wasn't called Marvel Comics back in the early Sixties. Publisher Martin Goodman copyrighted his titles under a maze of different corporation names — Zenith, Vista, and Atlas. And Marvel wasn't the only company cashing in on the B-movie-inspired nuclear monster fad. Even Batman and Tomahawk were tangling with aliens and other-dimensional creatures in their own magazines. Well, maybe *Dell* ignored the trend, and over at the American Comics Group, where Richard Hughes suffered in the same writer/editor position enjoyed by Stan Lee at Marvel, the focus was on the supernatural with a sprinkling of aliens. No monsters allowed.

In truth, it wasn't until 1959 that the *real* Marvel Monsters began appearing. Marvel at the time was on shaky ground, its super-heroes long gone, it was sustained by the likes of *Kid Colt, Outlaw, Millie the Model*, and a number of colorless supernatural titles written by Stan Lee and others and drawn by a train of forgotten artists. A company purge in the summer of 1957 killed off most of the supernatural titles, including the company's first title, *Marvel Tales*.

Then Jack Kirby wandered over from DC, where he had created *Challengers of the Unknown*, and began doing some of the science-fiction stories for *Strange Tales* (which went back to 1951) and *Tales to Astonish* (launched January 1959). Next thing you know, the pages were bursting with "I Unleashed Shagg Upon the World" (in which the Sphinx comes to life), "I Created Sporr! The Thing that Could Not Die!" (about a veerry *big* amoeba) and the unforgettable "Creature from Krogarr!" Stan Lee never showed this kind of imagination in his pre-1959 scripts, so I would guess it was Kirby, whose mother was born near Transylvania and told him some pretty wild legends when he was a kid, on whose doorstep we can lay the credit — or blame.

But Kirby wasn't alone. That same year, a self-effacing young artist named

If you stripped the covers, you couldn't tell one from the other.

Steve Ditko came over from Charlton and lent his unique talents to the revitalization of several titles. Nor was he alone. By the beginning of 1960, Stan Lee had weeded out the also-rans from his stable, trained a smaller group of replacements to work from plots instead of scripts, and established a new house look to his four remaining fantasy titles, *Strange Tales, Tales to Astonish, Journey into Mystery, Tales of Suspense,* and a new title begun in 1961, *Amazing Adventures.* Lee didn't bother to give them separate identities or slants. In fact, if you stripped the covers, which contained the indicia, you couldn't tell one from the other.

So what if he looked just like Grogg? Both were Chinese dragons, weren't they? And Goliath, a huge brown amphibian. He looked a lot like another huge brown amphibian, Gargantus. When Marvel reprinted the Goliath story in *Where Monsters Dwell,* Goliath was renamed "Gigantus," and when the Gargantus yarn was reprinted, he was called Gigantus *and* Gargantus, furthering the confusion. Marvel might as well have not bothered — Lee and his team were always repeating themselves. After all, there were only so many monsters a writer could dream up, especially under the Comics Code.

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The best monsters were always Thing-brown. Take my word for it.

Each issue stabilized into roughly this lineup: Jack Kirby, usually inked by Dick Ayers, led off with a monster epic of anywhere from seven to 13 pages; next would be a moody five-pager by Don Heck (or, occasionally Paul Reinman or Joe Sinnott), and Steve Ditko usually closed out the book with a gentle thought-provoker of the same length. For slightly more than three years, this tight little team wove their dreams and birthed their monsters.

AND NOW THAT YOU'RE ALIVE AGAIN, WHAT WILL YOU DO?
WE SHALL NOW RETURN TO OUR OWN WORLD!
AND WE SHALL TAKE YOU WITH US! YOU WILL MAKE AN INTERESTING SPECIMEN FOR OUR INTERGALACTIC ZOO!
ZOO?! NO! NO!! YOU CAN'T!!
DO NOT WORRY! YOU WILL BE GIVEN A CLEAN CAGE AND BE WELL TAKEN CARE OF!
THE ALIENS ARE SLOW-MOVING! MAYBE I CAN STILL GET AWAY!
YOU? YOU HAVE A BOAT? YOU'VE GOT TO GET US OUT OF HERE!
I WOULD HAVE HELPED YOU! I WOULD HAVE GIVEN YOU A HAND REHAND, AS I PROMISED! BUT THAT TIME BARRIER YOU TURNED ON ME! NOW YOU ARE ON YOUR OWN!!
B-BUT I CAN'T HANDLE A NATIVE CANOE! I DON'T KNOW THESE WATERS! LOOK — WHATEVER I DID TO YOU — I'M STILL A HUMAN, JUST LIKE YOU! YOU CAN'T LET THOSE CREATURES TAKE ME! YOU CAN'T!
YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND...
YOU ARE A HUMAN, INDEED!
BUT YOU ARE NOT JUST LIKE ME...
FOR, AS YOU CAN SEE—
— IT IS I WHO AM CAPTAIN OF THE STONE MEN!
AND SO HARRY DAVIES LEARNS HIS LAST LESSON — THAT UNEARTHLY CREATURES COME IN MANY SIZES...AND RETRIBUTION, IN MANY FORMS!
THE END
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They were nice monsters.

But they were *nice* monsters. I doubt if they anyone ever had nightmares over them or lay awake wondering if he might suffer the fate of the hero of Lee and Kirby's "Monster at my Window." No, these were monsters that made a young mind *think*; sometimes, they even made you feel . . .

If you wished, you could break down the Marvel Monsters into various phyla, species, and sub-categories, but to me there were only three broad classifications that mattered. Some Marvel Monsters were gray, some were green, but most were brown. Actually, these last were a rich, orange-brown, a color I call "Thing-brown" because it's the precise hue given Ben Grimm in the early *Fantastic Fours.* I suppose you could call the gray monsters "Hulk-gray" and the green monsters "Hulk-green" after the coloration of the Incredible Hulk in his first few issues, but that would be ridiculous. Besides, the best Marvel Monsters were always Thing-brown. Take my word for it.

Whatever their colors, their number and variety were legion. There was Fin Fang Foom, who terrorized Red China.

STAN LEE PRESENTS: WHERE MONSTERS DWELL™
I SAW DROOM the LIVING LIZARD!
HIDEOUS! MONSTROUS! THERE ARE NO WORDS TO ADEQUATELY DESCRIBE IT! THE LIZARD WAS SO LARGE THAT IT THREATENED THE VERY LIKE OF OUR PLANET! AND STILL IT CONTINUED TO GROW! WHERE WOULD IT END? HOW WOULD IT END? NO ONE KNEW! AND FEW DARED TO GUESS! FOR THIS WAS THE GRIMMEST TIME OF OUR LIVES! THIS WAS THE TIME OF DROOM!
HURRY! GET OUT OF THE CITY!
IT'S TOO LATE! WE'LL NEVER MAKE IT IN TIME!
WE DON'T HAVE A CHANCE! DROOM WILL DESTROY US ALL!
RUN FOR YOUR LIVES!
THE MONSTER WILL CRUSH US LIKE ANTS — AND NOTHING CAN STOP HIM! NOTHING!
ORIGINALLY PRESENTED IN ASTONISHING TALES #43

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reading comics for the first time. Why, then you'll even accept monsters made of smoke (Diablo), water (Gor-Kill), fire (Dragoom, an alien Human Torch), and wood (Groot). In fact, I count five or six animated tree-creatures, two giant gray ants (Grottu and Krang), and scores of robots and any number of variations on King Kong (Gorgilla and Bruttu come to mind especially).

When they tried to be different, Lee and Kirby went all out. Their most original creature was "Zzutak, the Thing That Shouldn't Exist," whose design was based on Aztec architecture! It was one of those rare stories combining Kirby's pencils and Ditko's impressionistic inks. But sometimes they went too far, as with "Trull, the Inhuman" and the creature in "We Found the Ninth Wonder of the World." They had the distinction of being the only cover-featured monsters Lee was afraid to show up front. The Ninth Wonder cover just showed part of a face peering through a stockade fence. That was so you didn't know it was only a giant tortoise. Only Trull's eyes showed on the cover of *Tales to Astonish* #21. You had to buy the book to learn he was a talking steam shovel animated by an alien's spirit.

Then there was the Walking Totem, who walked despite the lack of legs. He appeared twice in *Strange Tales* and once in *The Rawhide Kid* during that dark period when monsters sneaked into all the Western titles. And who can forget the story Lee did so many times, the one in which a flying saucer lands and everyone starts looking for an alien, not suspecting he's really that nearby oak tree, craggy hill, or as in my favorite variation: "We never dreamed! The spaceship *itself* was the alien!!"

Obviously, it wasn't easy coming up with a bunch of new monsters every month. New plots, either. Lee and Kirby

Vampires were out, for instance.

But mummies were acceptable. Trouble was they weren't very monstrous, so about once a year, Lee published a story about a *giant* mummy climbing out of the pyramids. There were Mummex, King of Mummies, and Gomdulla, the Living Pharaoh, and the unnamed thing from "When the Mummy Walks." It was explained in each case that the mummies were huge because they were really from other planets and had slumbered until the time was right to awaken and conquer. It wasn't very plausible, but this was why Stan Lee insisted on calling his masterpieces fantasy instead of science fiction. Fantasy doesn't have to make sense; it just *is*.

You had to ignore a lot of logic when you consumed a Lee-Kirby epic. They took two approaches to creating their creatures. There was the "It Came from Outer Space" approach involving aliens, and there was the "Science Spawned It" approach. Atomic or natural accidents usually caused the latter. You could accept a conquest-bent Martian who spoke English and shrugged off H-bombs, but when delta-rays bombarded an ordinary scarecrow in *Strange Tales* #81, it became 40 feet tall, spoke ("I . . . can . . . think . . . can . . . speak . . I am *alive!*") and laid waste to a city while punishing the evil banker who forecloseed on his builder — *before he came to life!* Well, that's hard to take.

The Ninth Wonder cover just showed part of a face peering through a stockade fence. That was so you didn't know it was only a giant tortoise.

But not if you're eight years old and developed a handful of formulas and played them over and over like disc jockeys on a rock 'n' roll high. The monster appears, he crashes about while humanity reels and the rock-jawed nominal hero cogitates desperately, then is destroyed by a) the hero's cleverness, b) a bigger monster, c) germs or some other *deus ex machina*, — or d) he wasn't really a monster after all, but a hoax designed to force the superpowers to lay down their nuclear arsenals.

There was always a Stan Lee moral at the end, usually something about brotherhood or God. But the true point was the sheer exuberance of Jack

There was always a Stan Lee moral at the end, usually something about brotherhood or God.

WE DID IT!!
IT WORKED!
WE'VE LAUNCHED HIM INTO OUTER SPACE!
VAROOOOOM
EDITOR'S NOTE: FOR PROFESSOR HENRY GORDON, OUR STORY ENDS HERE! BUT FOR DROOMEDIA REX, THE STORY WAS JUST BEGINNING! FOR ONCE IN OUTER SPACE HE STOPPED GROWING...THEN FOR TEN MILLION YEARS, IN SUSPENDED ANIMATION, HE DRIFTED THRU THE BLACK AIRLESS REACHES OF THE UNIVERSE...
...UNTIL HE FINALLY CAME TO REST ON A LARGE, PRIMITIVE, WATER-OXYGEN WORLD... A WORLD WHERE HE WOULD BE THE FIRST OF A NEW SPECIES -- WHERE HE WOULD RULE THE PLANET, UNTIL THE DAY HIS BREED DIED OUT! A WORLD WHICH MILLIONS OF YEARS LATER WOULD BE KNOWN AS... EARTH!
THE END

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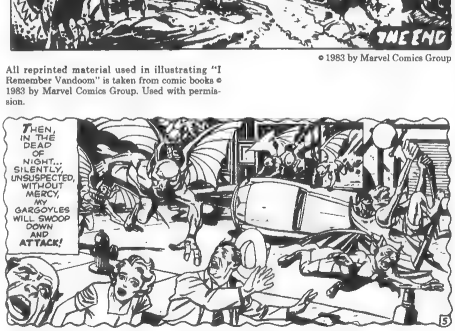

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Kirby's pencils. He really let himself go. I have to feel sorry for poor Dick Ayers, even 20 years later. Stan almost never let him draw a story; instead, Ayers had to apply his dryish inking to the task of taming Kirby's larger-than-life pencils. This was no easy chore, considering Kirby tended not to draw his spaceships the same from page to page, and when, as he did so often, he did sequels to older stories, he forgot what the characters looked like. I just hope Ayers enjoyed his work as much as I did.

I also have to feel sorry for Stan Lee. I'm sure his artists helped create the monsters (this seems to be when he first started plotting "Marvel-style"), but he had to *name* them. He was probably on his own. Otherwise, how could he have repeated himself so often? There was a Monstro, a Monstrom, and *two* Monsterosos. There was also an Orogo and an Orrgo and two Hulks. In fact, Lee reused a number of these names in his super-hero books, names like Magneto, Elektro, and Thorr (who looked suspiciously like one of the Stone Men from Saturn who were fought by the super-hero Thor in his first appearance).

LO! ONCE AGAIN DO WE LIVE!
IT ALL HAPPENED JUST LIKE THE OLD GUY SAID! HEY, WAIT--HE ALSO SAID THE STONE GIANTS WOULD BE "THE SLAVES OF WHOMSOEVER WHO AWAKENED THEM!" THAT GIVES ME AN IDEA!
BEAT IT, GRAN'PA! FROM HERE ON IN, I'M TAKIN' OVER!
NOW HEAR THIS! I BROUGHT YOU TO LIFE, SO YOU TAKE YOUR ORDERS FROM ME! YOU'RE GOING TO BE MY NEW MOB! WITH YOU BACKING MY PLAY, I'LL BE ABLE TO COMMIT THE GREATEST CRIMES OF ALL TIME! I'LL DEFY THE POLICE--THE ARMY--EVERYONE!
NO!!!
FOOL! DO YOU THINK CREATURES AS MIGHTY AS WE WOULD SERVE A PUNY EARTHLING!
BUT...I DON'T UNDERSTAND! THE OLD MAN SAID---
WORDS! JUST A HOLLOW LEGEND WHICH WE STARTED SO THAT SOMEBODY WOULD BRING US BACK TO LIFE!
YOU SEE, WE ARE FROM ANOTHER WORLD! WE WERE FLYING PAST EARTH WHEN OUR SHIP DEVELOPED ENGINE TROUBLE!
"OUR CAPTAIN DID NOT KNOW IF HE COULD LAND US SAFELY, SO HE ORDERED US TO BAIL OUT!"
"AND SO WE CAME TO EASTER ISLE!"
AFTER THE CAPTAIN LANDS AND REPAIRS THE SHIP, HE WILL COME FOR US!
BUT WE KNOW NOT HOW LONG THAT WILL TAKE! WE HAD BEST CONSERVE OUR STRENGTH TILL THEN!
WE WILL PLACE OURSELVES IN SUSPENDED ANIMATION! OUR LEADER WILL AWAKEN US WHEN HE ARRIVES!
BUT, BY THE TIME OUR CAPTAIN ARRIVED, HE HAD FORGOTTEN THE MAGIC INCANTATION TO REVIVE US!
FORTUNATELY, IT HAD BEEN OUR HABIT TO WRITE THE WORDS ON A PARCHMENT AND HIDE IT AS A SAFETY MEASURE!
BUT WE HID IT TOO WELL! NO ONE WAS ABLE TO FIND IT FOR ALL THESE YEARS--UNTIL NOW!
5
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Don Heck didn't have it much better. He almost never got to do cover stories, and when Lee did relent, it was always a giant lizard tale. ("I Found Rro" and "I Saw Droom, the Living Lizard!") Even then, Kirby or Ditko did the cover. Don Heck didn't get much respect, but he did such great robot stories as "I Was Face-to-Face with the Forbidden Robot" (*Tales to Astonish* #11). And his scratchy shadow-clotted inks fitted the inevitable ghost stories perfectly.

Even Paul Reinman, whose following is in doubt, produced a minor classic of his own, "The Pretender" (*Tales to Astonish* #31), about a man who discovered evidence an alien had landed on earth and taken human form as a first step toward conquest. In the last panel, the man gazed upon a photo of the alien's new body and realized that it's too late. The face is that of Nikita Khrushchev. Silly in retrospect, it was perfect for 1962.

If Kirby was King of Monsters, Steve Ditko was Emir of Aliens.

But my favorite of the Marvel crew had to be Steve Ditko. In those days, he inked his own pencils in a creepy, crepuscular style similar to the one Joe Kubert used around then. It was perfect for haunted-house stories (Ditko did the best of these), retold fairy tales (to which he was partial, judging from his non-Marvel work), countless time machine quickies, and flying saucer stories. If Kirby was King of Monsters, Steve Ditko was Emir of Aliens. Take "Haag, Hunter of Helpless Humans" (*Tales of Suspense* #37), which was one of the rare cover epics Ditko did. Haag was a big green alien with a jocular face, button nose, and — touch of touches — two face tentacles forming a sort of Fu Manchu mustache! No mere monster, Haag had a personality, thanks to Ditko's marvelous ability with faces.

Ditko's stories were unique, so I suspect he plotted them himself. They could only be described as out of the Brothers Grimm by way of O. Henry and Rod Serling. One of the strangest was "The Secret of the Black Planet" in *Tales of Suspense* #28 when an escaped convict stumbled across what he thought was a rocket standing on its tailfins, only to have the rocket *stand up* and open a rather Freudian maw between its legs. I'm surprised this got past the Code.

Stan Lee doubtless recognized Ditko's special qualities, because he converted Marvel's last new monster book, *Amazing Adventures*, into the all-Ditko *Amazing Adult Fantasy* with the seventh issue. No epics, just five-pagers like the eerie "In Human Form" and the touching "I, Gargoyle," about a hideous man who discovered acceptance with a blind underground people.

The beauty of Ditko's work was that he stretched himself and was not afraid to reach into his own soul and depict his own feelings of hope, despair, pathos, and humor. He was the only Marvel artist to do humor. Lee called his work "off-beat." This is why *Amazing Adult Fantasy* is my favorite title of the Marvel Age of Monsters. (Of course, with the fifteenth and final issue, *Amazing Fantasy* introduced a new super-hero feature called Spider-Man, by Lee and Ditko, but that's another story.)

My favorite Steve Ditko story, and one that will live in my memory until the day I die, appeared in *Journey into Mystery* #78. Titled "Monsters on Mercury," it was the quintessential Ditko five-pager. A group of U.S. astronauts (in T-shirts, a nice touch) was encamped on Mercury. Huge green aliens with wise faces, looking like headmasters on steroids, appeared but did not attack. The astronauts felt their minds being probed. Tension mounted, and they hummed Christmas carols to resist the intrusion. Then the aliens placed a draped cone near the camp. Fearing a bomb, one brave guy ventured out and uncovered . . . a crude Christmas tree. The Earthmen and the smiling aliens made friends. "And so," Lee wrote back in 1962, "millions of miles from Earth, two alien races meet and

join in brotherhood, inspired by a symbol of peace and good will which has endured thru the ages!" I wonder if Lee and Ditko knew, when they did this story, that it could mean so much to those of us young enough to take it to heart unreservedly?

Looking back, I find my favorite Lee/Kirby monster story was not one of their epics, but a quiet yarn in *Tales to Astonish* #30 called "The Thing from the Hidden Swamp." It was about a plain girl who went on a cruise and still couldn't get a date. Then she stumbled on a spaceship stuck in a bog and the alien monster who owned it. Frightened, she nevertheless agreed to handle the controls while the huge Thing-brown alien pushed from outside. They succeed, the alien promised the girl a reward, but flew off without, apparently, doing anything. It's only later that she realized her plain features are now beautiful — never mind how, Lee didn't explain that part — the work of the monster. Ditko had done a similar story only months before in *Tales of Suspense*, but I didn't know it then and don't care now.

Favorite stories aside, the single issue of all the titles that most encapsulates what the Marvel Age of Monsters means to me was *Tales to Astonish* #17. That was the issue with a perfect little Ditko story about an evil old man whose wishes — much to his eternal regret — came true, "Beware! Of the Ghastly Glass!" and a nice Heck yarn, "I Dared to Enter the Haunted Room."

The lead story was the wonderful "Vandoom, the Man who Made a Creature!" It was about a misunderstood waxworks artist named Vandoom, who constructed a Thing-brown wax monster so huge he had to cut a hole in his roof for the head, which he covered with a dropcloth so as not to scare his fellow Balkan villagers. When lightning struck the head, the brutish creature came to life and fled the town just one step ahead of the torch-carrying villagers. For once, this Lee/Kirby critter didn't have a name or the power of speech. Before the townspeople could kill the thing, Martians decided to invade Transylvania, and Vandoom's monster tore into them, foiling the invasion. His vital force spent, the monster collapsed in a heap. The villagers were aghast. They almost destroyed the very creature who saved them. In atonement, they helped Vandoom build another monster.

The chillingly atmospheric story ended with Vandoom standing on his storm-lashed roof, looking at the draped head of this new creation, wondering, "What if *another* bolt of lightning brings life to this one . . . who knows what the result may be *next* time! . . . Who *knows!*" Vandoom's creature never returned. The promise was enough.

The reason this issue is so symbolic of what Marvel meant to me back then was that I found that particular issue — and it was not only coverless, but missing the first page, so I didn't know which magazine it was or the lead story's title or even what dark motives inspired Vandoom. I only knew that this was an impossibly old issue of one of the Marvel titles, and all of that invested it with a special magic that might have evaporated had I found a complete copy. It might have been dropped from a Ditko flying saucer.

But that's the point. At the time I first began collecting comics, in the final weeks of 1961, my chief interests were the popular *Superman* and *Batman*. I only bought the Marvel titles when I had spare change. Marvel then was a comic-book backwater, an insular world so remote from everything else on the newsstands that it's hard, even now, to think that those issues with their flat interior colors (whole panels were done in red or yellow), yet richly three-dimensional covers, could have been produced by people at all like those at the other comic-book companies — if by people at all. Lee, Kirby, Ditko — they were as much a fantasy as Rommbu or the Wommelly. That's why, so many years later, I look back upon them so uncritically and with such affection.

When I first entered the Marvel Age of Monsters, it was already a waning world, although I didn't realize it at the time. The Fantastic Four were encountering the return of The Sub-Mariner, but that wasn't really a super-hero book at first, especially in its first two issues,

before the Four got their costumes. It was more a monster-vs.-monster experiment. The Hulk had yet to be created, Henry Pym didn't merit a second thought, and there wasn't a hint of Spider-Man to be found in the pages of *Amazing Adult Fantasy*. But, by the end of 1962, that would all be changing — although even in *The Fantastic Four*, Lee and Kirby wouldn't drop the security of their monster slant for another couple of years — and a new era of giants came into being.

You don't see much of these early roots in today's Marvel titles. It's too bad, because the Marvel Age of Comics wasn't so much a revolution as a tentative adapting of ideas and artists to a new direction. When publisher Martian Goodman told Stan Lee to come up with a group of super-heroes, he was so unsure of bucking the monster trend that he included a poorly conceived *Strange Tales* reject, The Thing, into the mix. When that caught on, he added *The Incredible Hulk*, about a hero who was also a monster.

Just a month before Bruce Banner got hit by gamma rays, scientist Victor Avery swallowed a potion and turned into "The Midnight Monster" in *Journey into Mystery* #79. He was a gray brute who looked a lot like The Hulk from *Hulk* #1. The very name was taken from The Living Hulk, a monster who had appeared in *Journey into Mystery* more than a year before. "The Midnight Monster" was an updating of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, which was also (according to Jack Kirby) the inspiration for The Hulk. I wonder if part of the impetus toward The Hulk came from this forgotten gray brute?

And there were more offspring of the monster period. For some reason, Lee revived the hero of a lackluster *Tales to Astonish* story, "The Man in the Ant Hill," and The Ant-Man took over that title. (It could have been worse; they could have brought back The Worm Man.) The same month Dr. Doom appeared in *The Fantastic Four*, a furry alien with almost the same rivet-studded face appeared in "The Monster in the Iron Mask!" (*Tales of Suspense* #31). On the cover, he was green with a gray mask, increasing the resemblance, but inside he was brown. But for the whim of a colorist, perhaps Dr. Doom would be wearing Thing-brown robes today. Let's not forget Dr. Droom, who preceded Dr. Strange in *Amazing Adventures*.

By 1963, a new breed of heroes had usurped the pages of every Marvel monster title and only Steve Ditko's back-up stories remained as a gesture to continuity. Even they passed into the night eventually. Marvel became so good, I even stopped reading *Superman*.

But sometimes, late at night, I miss those striding behemoths and think back to those days when I was in the third grade and there were monsters lurking at the drugstore. In a small part of my heart of hearts, it will always be early 1962, when *The Fantastic Four* was an aberration, a pleasant upstart, *The Hulk* was a mere excuse to avoid creating a new monster every two months, Captain America still slept in ice, and *Tales to Astonish*, *Amazing Adult Fantasy*, and the others, were Marvel Comics.

The Cost of Collecting:

AMAZING ADULT FANTASY (Amazing Adventures No. 1-6; Amazing Fantasy No. 15)
No. 7, Dec., 1961 — No. 14, July, 1962

Marvel Comics Group (AAF)	Good	Fine	Mint
7: Ditko-a No. 7-14	5.50	16.00	32.00
8-14: 12-1st app. Mole Man	4.50	13.00	26.00

AMAZING ADVENTURES (Amazing Adult Fantasy No. 7)
June, 1961 — No. 6, Nov., 1961

Marvel Comics Group (AAH)			
1-Origin Dr. Droom (1st Marvel-Age Superhero) by Kirby; Ditko & Kirby-a in all; Kirby c-1-6	9.00	'25.00	50.00
2-Powell-a (2)	5.00	14.00	28.00
3-6: Last Dr. Droom	3.50	10.00	20.00

AMAZING FANTASY (. . . Adult Fantasy No. 7-14; Amazing Adventures No. 1-6)
No. 15, Sept., 1962 (on 1st pg.)

Marvel Comics Group (AMF)			
15-Origin & 1st. app. of Spider-Man by Ditko; Kirby/Ditko-c	185.00	550.00	1200.00

JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY (1st Series) (Thor No. 126 on) 6/52-No. 48, 8/57; No. 49, 11/58 — No. 125, 2/66 Atlas (CPS No. 1-48/AMI No. 49-82/Marvel No. 83 on)

1	37.00	110.00	230.00
2	18.00	54.00	115.00
3, 4	13.50	40.00	80.00
5-11	8.50	25.00	50.00
12-30, 32: 22-Donnenapoe-a; last pre code	5.50	16.00	32.00
Donnenapoe-Tothish-a by Andru	6.00	18.00	36.00
31, 33-40, 42: 24-Torma? -a	3.00	8.00	16.00
41, 43-48	6.00	18.00	36.00

34-Williamson, Krigstein-a	6.00	18.00	36.00
39-Wood-a	5.50	16.00	32.00
41-Crandall-a, Frazetta esque-a by Morrow	3.50	10.00	20.00
42-Torres-a	3.00	8.00	16.00
43, 44-Williamson/Mayo-a in both	3.50	10.00	20.00
45, 47-49, 52, 53: 49-Check-a	2.00	6.00	12.00
46-Torres & Krigstein-a	3.50	10.00	20.00
50-Davis-a	2.00	6.00	12.00
51-Kirby/Wood-a	2.00	6.00	12.00
54-Williamson-a	2.00	6.00	12.00
55-61, 63-72: 66-Return of Xemu	2.00	5.00	10.00
62-1st app. Xemu (Titan) called "The Hulk"	3.50	10.00	20.00
74-82 Contents change to fantasy with #77	1.20	3.50	7.00
83-Origin & 1st app. The Mighty Thor by Kirby (8/62)	90.00	240.00	480.00
83 Reprint from the Golden Record Comic Set	.70	2.00	4.00
with the record	1.50	4.00	8.00

NOTE: *Bailey 1-43, Briefer a-5, 12 Check a-23, 81. Ditko a-50-96, c-71. Ditko/Kirby a-36, 50-83. Everett a-20, 40, c-4-6, 9, 37, 39, 40, 41, 44; 45, Heath c-51 Kirby a-66, 80, 83-89, 93, 97, 98-100 (w/Heck), 101-135, c-50-85 (w/Ditko) 83, 84, 86, 87, 89, 90, 92,94, 97-185. Morrow a-41, 42. Orlando a-30, 45, 57. Mac Pahula (Tothish) a-9. Powell a-27. Robinson a-9. Severin a-27. Wildey a-16.*

STRANGE TALES (Dr. Strange No. 169 on)
6/51-No. 168, 5/68; No. 169, 9/73-No. 188, 11/76 Atlas (CCPC No. 1-4?/ZPC No. 68-79/YPI No. 80-167) Marvel No. 108 on.

	Good	Fine	Mint
1	42.00	125.00	265.00
2	18.00	55.00	125.00
3-5	14.00	42.50	85.00
6-10	10.00	30.00	60.00
10-Krigstein-a	11.00	32.50	65.00
11-14, 16-20	4.20	12.50	25.00
15-Krigstein-a	5.00	15.00	30.00
21, 23-27, 29-31-Last pre-code issue	3.20	9.50	19.00
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42, 45, 59, 61-Krigstein-a	3.00	9.00	18.00
53-Torres, Crandall-a	3.50	10.00	20.00
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58, 64-Williamson-a in each, with Mayo-No. 58	3.50	10.00	20.00
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91-96, 98-100-Kirby-a	1.50	4.00	8.00
97-Ant Man app.; Kirby-a	2.00	6.00	12.00
101-Human Torch begins by Jack Kirby (10/62)	14.00	40.00	90.00
Annual 1 (1962)-Reprints from Str. Tales No. 73, 76, 78, Tales of Suspense No. 9, Tales to Astonish No. 1, 6, 7, & Journey into Mystery No. 52, 55, 59	6.00	18.00	36.00
Annual 2 (1963)-Reprints from Str. Tales No. 67, Str. Worlds (Atlas) No. 3, World of Fantasy No. 16; Human Torch vs. Sper-Man by Ditko/Kirby; Kirby-c	5.00	15.00	30.00

NOTE: *Briefer a-17; Colan 1-11, 20; Davis c-71; Ditko 1-50, 67-146, 175r, 182-188, 7, Everett a-3-5, 40-42, 45, 73, 147-152, 16-41; c-10, 11, 13, 34, 50, 51, 150, 152, Forte a-43, 60; Heath c-20, G. Kane c-170-173; Kirby Human torch-101-105, 108, 110, 114, 120, Nick Fury 135p, 141-143p; (layouts)-136-140, 144-153; other Kirby 1-72, 78p, 84p, 97-99p, 153; layouts-135-140, 144-153, c-68-70, 72, 92, 94, 101-140. Lieber/Fox a-110, 111 113; Masuelly 1-42, Moldoff a-5-, Orlando a-41, 44, 46, 49, 62; Powell a-42, 44, 46, 50-54, 131-133, 134p; Robinson a-17; Wildey a-42, Woodbridge a-59; Fantastic Four cameo 101-134; Jack Katz app. 26.*

TALES OF SUSPENSE (Captain America No. 100 on)
Jan., 1959 — No. 99, March, 1968
Atlas (YPI No. 1, 2/Male No. 3-12/YPI No. 13-40)/Marvel No. 41 on

	Good	Fine	Mint
1-Williamson-a, 5 pgs.	27.00	80.00	180.00
2, 3	13.00	32.50	65.00
4-Williamson-a, 4-pgs; Kirby/Everett c/a	12.00	35.00	70.00
5-10	6.00	18.00	36.00
11, 13-22	4.00	12.00	24.00
12-Crandall-a	4.25	14.00	28.00
23-38	2.00	6.00	12.00
39-Origin & 1st app Iron Man, 1st Iron Man story; Kirby layouts	55.00	160.00	330.00

NOTE: *Ditko/Kirby art in most all issues No. 1-16, 17-49; Forte a-5, 9, Kirby pencils (Iron Man) 40, 41, 43; c-39-44, 46-56, 98p.*

TALES TO ASTONISH (The Incredible Hulk No. 102 on)
Jan., 1959-No. 101, March, 1968
Atlas (MAP No. 1/ZPC No. 2-14/YPI No. 15-42)/Marvel No. 43 on

1-Jack Davis-a	27.00	80.00	180.00
2-Ditko-c	13.50	40.00	80.00
3	10.00	30.00	60.00
4	7.00	20.00	40.00
5-Williamson-a, 4 pgs.	9.50	28.00	56.00
6-10	5.00	15.00	30.00
11-20	3.50	10.00	20.00
21-26, 28-34	2.00	6.00	12.00
27-1st Ant Man app. (1/62)	64.00	190.00	400.00
35-2nd Ant-Man, 1st in costume; begins series	24.00	70.00	150.00

NOTE: *Berg a-1; Ditko a-in most issues 1-63, 65-48; Kirby a-1-34 (most), 35-40, 44, 49-70, c-1, 5, 50-70, 73, 75, 77 (w/Romita), 78 (w/Colan), 79, 81, 85 (all w/Everett), 90.*

News!

SOMEHOW I DON'T THINK ARCHIES GOING TO REALIZE YOU'RE POSING FOR A FEW-FEST
NOW! WHEN THEY SEE THAT GATEFOLD, ALL THE WOMEN IN AMERICA WILL BE BANGING ON MY DOOR!
AND THE OTHER HALF WILL BE ON YOURS!
I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY IS SCHEI-NING WRONG WITH THE SUIT?
WHAT THERE IS OF IT, YOU MEAN!
YOU'D ... PROBABLY TURN HOMOSEXUAL
NO, DON'T LISTEN TO HIM, SCHNOUCKS. THAT SUIT'S SWELL. VECCHI, EARLY BREAKFAST
THANKS!
I'LL HAVE IT DRY-CLEANED THIS SECOND
LEASH IT, SLIME-BALL!
OH, MY GOLDEN BEAUTY. COME MARRY ME AND LET'S MAKE OIL AND 3 KIDS TOGETHER
SO THIS IS YOUR ANSWER, STARFIRE? WHO DO YOU PREFER FOR, DOMINO?
...I'M STRICTLY AMBIDEXTROUS, MAN
OH, GARFIELD, YOU'RE SO SWELL!
KLICK!
KLICK!
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THE JUDAS CONTRACT
A FOUR-PART NOVEL
HEY, NICE APARTMENT, DOMINO
WHERE'D YOU GET THE MONEY? IT'S MORE THAN A FORTUNE
A GIFT FROM GREEN LANTERN/CORPS, SHE'S MY AMERICAN MOTHER
MACHINE FOR SANDWICHES AND COCOA?
PEANUT BUTTER?! YECCH! C'MON, STARFIRE'S TREATING TONIGHT
HOW'RE THE WEDDING PLANS GOING?
I DON'T KNOW. WE'RE GOING ORDER TRYING TO FIND A GIRL WHERE WE CAN HAVE SOME PRIVACY!
I MAY KNOW SOME OF YOUR SECRETS, BUT THE OUTSIDE WORLD SHOULDN'T
HEY, NO PROBLEM. DOMINO AND I HAVE A HIDEOUT BY HOT SPRINGS, AR. BUT IS IT BIG ENOUGH?
WE JUST SPACE AT DAYBON BEFORE YOU CAN HOLD THE WEDDING THERE
HAWAIIAN TEMPTING ISLAND SOME PROBLEMS...
WHAT DO YOU SAY, HONEY?
SURE, WHY NOT?

Beginning with *New Teen Titans* #40, writer Marv Wolfman and artist George Perez become co-editors of the comic. "It's a good situation," Wolfman said. "We're certain of what our strengths are, which will help when things are proofread and edited."

The comic is also to undergo a title change. As of issue #41, it will be called *Tales of the Teen Titans*. The title *New Teen Titans* will then be used for the deluxe format comic book which will be sold only through the direct-sales market. This version also will be co-edited by Perez and Wolfman. The first few issues will deal with Raven's story.

In *Tales of the Teen Titans* #44, Dick Grayson will adopt a new identity — Nightwing. That same issue will introduce a new Titan named Jericho, who is the son of The Terminator, a deadly foe of the Titans.

These are layouts of Pages 2 and 3 from ***Tales of the Teen Titan*** *#42. The backgrounds and Starfire's swimsuit will later be filled in by inker (and DC Vice President-Executive Editor) Dick Giordano.*

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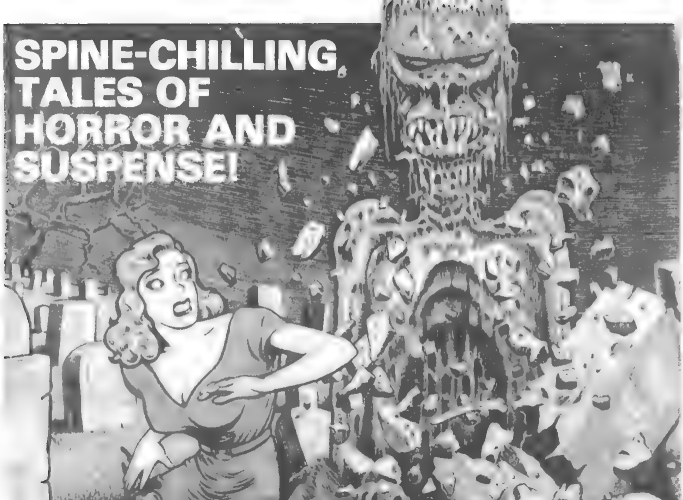


Weird Tales of the Future #3 (Sept. 1952) and © 1952 by S.P.M. Publications, Inc.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF PRE-CODE HORROR

by Lawrence Watt-Evans

If you're under the age of 30, you may not even have realized that there WERE comic books that rivalled NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD in explicit horror.

People have always told horror stories, throughout recorded history — tales *of things* out there in the dark, waiting to pounce, of the dead returned to seek vengeance, of strange fates and inexplicable happenings. From the ancient roman lamia to today's celluloid vampires, people have always loved a good scare.

At any rate, *some* people have. Others consider tales of terror to be unhealthy and perverse; how, they ask, can anyone enjoy hearing about death and disaster, about grue and gore?

Every so often these two groups come into conflict; sometimes the censors win, sometimes the horror fans escape. In the early Fifties, in the comic books, the censors won one of their most complete victories. If you're under the age of 30, you may not even have realized that there *were* comic books that rivalled *Night of the Living Dead* in explicit horror.

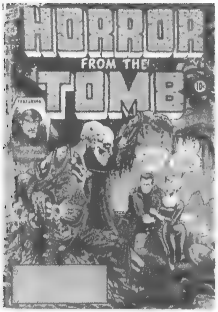
How did these comics come about, and how did they die?

That's what I'm here to tell you.

To begin at the beginning, the comic book as we know it today evolved out of the comic strip; the first comic books were just reprints of strips, collected in a convenient package. Naturally, these early comics had much the same assortment of material as the strips of the time. There were short, humorous items; ongoing adventure serials about all-American heroes; funny-animal adventures; and the occasional science-fiction strip replete with mad scientists and rocket ships.

Comic books were established during the Great Depression, starting in 1933. That was a time when money was scarce, so perhaps it's not surprising that for the first five years there was relatively little experimentation in the comics. *Detective Comics*, when it first appeared, was considered daring, because it focused on a single sort of adventure! Nobody could afford to take the risk of introducing anything radically new; simply publishing *any* sort of a comic book was quite risky enough.

In 1938, however, National Periodical



Horror from the Tomb #1 (Sept. 1954) is © 1954 by Premier Magazines, Inc.

Publications introduced Superman and started the ball rolling. He was just one of several features in an otherwise ordinary title called *Action Comics*, but he was such an immediate hit that he transformed comics forever. Suddenly, everybody wanted to cash in on the craze for costumed heroes.

What does this have to do with horror comics, you ask? I'm getting to that.

From 1940 to 1946, costumed heroes — not yet called "super-heroes" — were everywhere, hundreds of them, fighting crooks, spies, and saboteurs of every sort. Many publishers thought they had found a permanent gravy train.

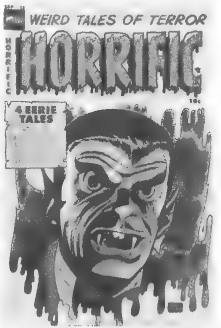
Other comics still existed, of course, but super-heroes predominated. There were many of them, and their sales were some of the highest in the medium. Furthermore, they brought in enough money that publishers were now able to be somewhat more adventurous.

To many people, Superman and his imitators seemed to derive, not from the comic strips, but from the pulp magazines of the Thirties. There were definite similarities to Doc Savage, and Kal-El's Kryptonian origin was straight out of *Amazing Stories*. Therefore, other pulp heroes and genres started to appear in comic books: Jungle stories, Westerns, romances, air war stories, space opera, and so forth. The entire field boomed.

One category of pulp magazine was horror — *Horror Stories*, *Weird Tales*, *Terror Tales*, and others. However, these were among the very sleaziest of the pulps, the sort of thing parents would snatch away and burn, given half a chance, largely because they mixed horror with perverse sexuality — a typical cover would show a naked girl about to be tortured in some bizarre way.

Comic books were aimed mostly at children, and horror pulps were aimed at adults — or sweaty-palmed adolescents, anyway. Therefore, the comic-book publishers did not rush to put out horror titles. They were doing quite well enough with masked vigilantes, Western gunslingers, spacemen, and talking rabbits.

But then, in 1946 and 1947, comic sales slumped. The reasons aren't entirely known, but my own theory is that parents returning from the military or the defense plant at the end of the Second World War noticed what their kids were spending their allowances on, and told them to stop reading such trash. Also, with the loss of the Nazis as ready-made villains, the stories lost much of their appeal. Mad scientists trying to conquer the world were all very well, but the Nazis had been *real*. In every family, there was a father or brother or uncle who had gone to fight them. Kids reading about Captain America punching out Nazis could indentify with it all.

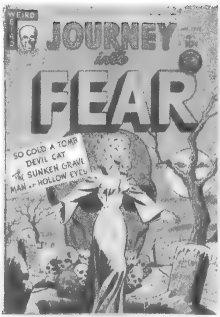


Horrific #13 (Sept. 1954) is © 1954 by Mystery Publishing Company, Inc.

At any rate, whatever the reasons, the public was no longer willing to buy just anyone in cape and tights. The best heroes survived, but dozens fell by the wayside and were lost.

The publishers didn't worry about the reasons for all this. They just assumed that superheroes had been a fad and had run their course. The thing to do was to find the *next* big fad and ride that, in order to get sales back up to wartime levels.

The publishers tried various things. Walt Disney's work was popular, so funny animals proliferated. Lev Gleason's *Crime Does Not Pay* was one of the most successful comics, so crime comics multiplied like rabbits. For a time, Westerns looked as if they might be the next big boom, and hundreds of Western titles appeared. All through the late Forties fads come and went, culminating in the huge, brief burst of interest in romance comics in 1949 and 1950.



Journey into Fear #5 (Jan. 1952).

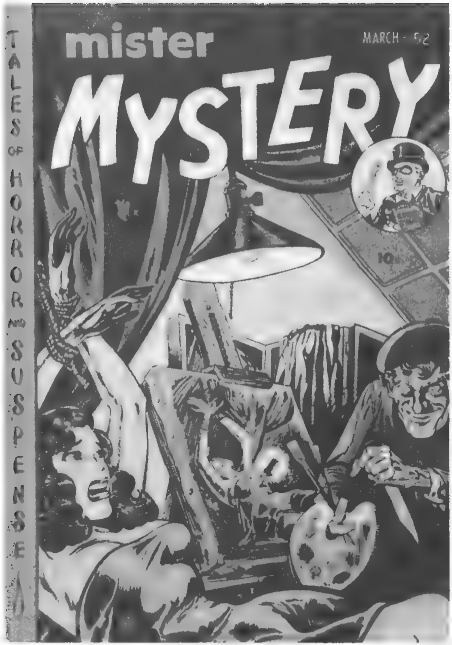
During this unsettled period, a couple of publishers, searching desperately for the next big fad, tried horror comics. In 1947, Avon put out a one-shot, experimental title, *Eerie*.

Apparently it was not a success, as no second issue appeared. Still, it was the first horror comic. I'd like to be able to tell you more about it, but unfortunately, I don't have a copy, and have never seen one. It's not all that rare, I just haven't come across it.

I believe, however, that it was similiar in most regards to the horror pulps, though without the heavy dose of crypto-sexuality.

The next milestone came in 1948. American Comics Group — ACG — was a small publisher of a handful of humor titles that decided it was time to branch out. With the Fall 1948 issues they started two new titles. The first was *Blazing West*, riding the fad of the moment; the other was *Adventures into the Unknown*, the first ongoing horror title.

That first issue contained an adaptation of the classic ghost story, *The Castle of Otranto* by Horace Walpole, a tale of a haunted castle, an ancient curse, and so forth. That novel is considered to be the first real Gothic horror story, which gives us an idea of what ACG had in mind. They were planning to do ghost stories — nothing very lurid.



Mister Mystery #4 (Mar. 1952) is © 1951 by Media Publications, Inc

ADVENTURES INTO THE UNKNOWN sold well enough to survive, but it hardly started any new craze.

Adventures into the Unknown sold well enough to survive, but it hardly started any new craze.

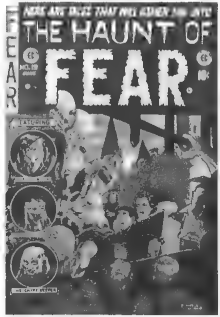
Let us shift the scene a little, and look at another publisher. This was a time when there were dozens of comic-book publishers; anybody who wanted to become a publisher needed only to have money and to be able to get a contract with a distributor. Artists, writers, and printers could be hired with a few phone calls; there were studios listed in the New York phone book that would turn out complete stories for anyone who could pay. There were *lots* of publishers, not just the handful we know today, all struggling to survive. I've already mentioned ACG and Avon and, of course, the giant National/DC and the not-quite-so-giant Timely/Marvel.

One of the smallest and least successful outfits in the business in the late forties was EC — the initials had originally stood for Educational Comics, but had quickly been changed to Entertaining Comics. Founded by Max Gaines, who had more or less invented the comic book back in 1933, the company was not flourishing when Gaines died in 1947 and left it all to his son, William M. Gaines.

William Gaines knew very little about comic books; he had intended to be a teacher, not a publisher, and might well have shut the company down had his mother not wanted him to carry on.

From his father's death in 1947 to early 1950, Gaines did nothing very special. EC followed the fads, switching from funny animals to crime to Western to romance, never doing well but never quite going bankrupt. Gaines apparently never saw that first *Eerie* or *Adventures into the Unknown*, as he later claimed that he had single-handedly invented the horror comic. He hadn't — but he was the first publisher to do it right. His inspiration came, not from the pulps, but from the old radio shows, such as *Suspense!* and *Inner Sanctum* and *Weird Circle*.

Gaines apparently had decided that there was no way he could really do worse than he already was doing as a publisher and set out to have fun with his company, publishing comics that *he* enjoyed. Starting at the end of 1949, he



The Haunt of Fear #19 (May-June 1953) is © 1953 by Fables Publishing Co., © 1983 by William M. Gaines.

began switching the EC line over to horror. Early in 1950, the entire line became what he called "the New Trend," which contained, at first, five titles: *Crypt of Terror*, *Vault of Horror*, *Haunt of Fear*, *Weird Science*, and *Weird Fantasy*.

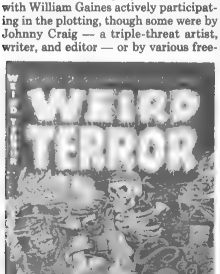
The last two were science fiction, and don't concern us here.

The other three, however, were horror comics, and all quickly became real hits. All three followed the same pattern. Each issue had four stories of roughly equal length. Each story was introduced by a host, who would then appear and make comments in the last panel. This was derived from the radio shows, which all had hosts. (*Inner Sanctum*, for example, had every episode introduced by Raymond, who would welcome the listener through the squeaky door into his sanctum.)

Similarly, *The Crypt of Terror* was presided over by the Crypt-Keeper, *The*

Vault of Horror was the domain of the Vault-Keeper, and *The Haunt of Fear* was the province of the Old Witch.

The stories themselves were neither pulpish tales of heroes saving virgins from demented fiends, nor adaptations of old ghost stories. They were straight-ahead, no-holds-barred horror stories, short and nasty and full of vampires, werewolves, and the walking dead. They were helped immensely by EC's staff. EC had managed to acquire some of the best young artists in the business, such as Wallace Wood, Graham Ingels, Al Williamson, Jack Davis, Jack Kamen . . . a long, impressive list. The stories were written mostly by Al Feldstein, with William Gaines actively participating in the plotting, though some were by Johnny Craig — a triple-threat artist, writer, and editor — or by various free-lance writers. The EC style had dark, crowded panels with wordy, moody captions, and a twist or double-twist ending to each story.



Weird Terror #2 (Nov. 1952) is © 1952 by Allen Hardy Associates.

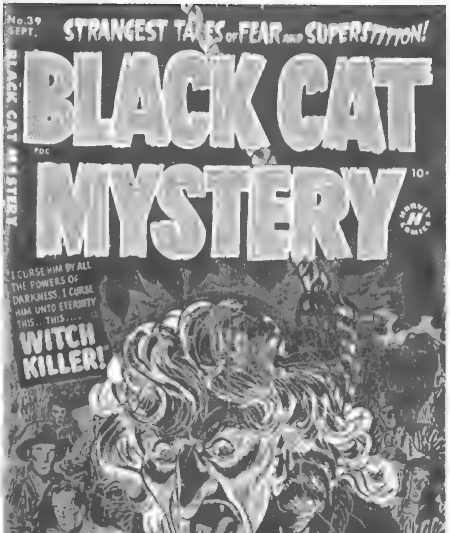
The public loved it.

And, of course, whenever something succeeds, there are imitators. All those dozens of comic book publishers saw EC's three titles succeeding spectacularly. Immediately, imitations began to appear.

ACG was already in the field, of course, but *Adventures into the Unknown* changed; the fairly tame ghost stories gave way to ghouls and zombies. Other titles were added, starting with *Forbidden Worlds* in 1951.

Avon also returned to the field, reviving *Eerie*.

If I were to list every title and publisher which appeared in the horror field in 1950 through 1952, it would take pages; there were literally hundreds of titles. At one point in 1952, at the peak of the horror boom, there were more than 500 comic-book titles on the stands, of which about 150 were horror. That was almost a third of all the comics being published, at a time when Westerns, super-heroes, crime, romance, and funny animals were all still flourishing, in various degrees — not to mention jungle comics, air war, and science fiction. Every publisher with more than a couple of titles published horror; there were several publishers who did nothing else.


No.39 SEPT.
STRANGEST TALES OF FEAR AND SUPERSTITION!
BLACK CAT MYSTERY
10¢
I CURSE HIM BY ALL THE POWERS OF DARKNESS I CURSE HIM UNTO ETERNITY THIS... THIS...
WITCH KILLER!

Black Cat Mystery #39 (Sept. 1952) is © 1952 by Harvey Features Syndicate.

At the peak of the horror boom, there were more than 500 comic-book titles on the stands, of which about 150 were horror.

Of all those dozens of titles, most were imitations of EC's three. Most contained short stories; most had hosts introducing them; most tried (often unsuccessfully) to use twist endings.

The degrees to which they imitated EC varied immensely, as was the *way* in which they imitated EC. National/DC, for example, had its own rules and formulae for putting together comic books. Titles such as *Sensation Mystery* or *House of Mystery* may have dealt with werewolves and haunted houses, but they did not follow the EC pattern. Instead, they had much the same structure as any other sort of story from DC.

Harvey Comics, on the other hand, did everything they could to copy EC. Its horror titles were *Tomb of Terror*, *Chamber of Chills*, *Witches Tales*, and *Black Cat Mystery*. *Tomb of Terror* and *Chamber of Chills* followed the EC title

SOME COMIC SERVICES CLAIM THA

THEY'RE WRONG!

Same History: We are back! STVX COMIC SERVICE was the first major comic service to advertise in the fanzine media years ago. We built a loyal following and became the largest comic service of its kind up to 1981. During that year the disastrous postal strikes really put a kibosh on it. Since that time we have been healing our wounds, but we've never ceased service. And during the time since we've made several major changes and improvements to the comic service to make it even BETTER than it was! We're back, and we're looking towards the future!

What Services do we offer?: We supply a full line of comic books and comic-related publications to fans throughout the world. We also supply a few selected items such as Fleshtone and Playboy, but we have kept those to a minimum, concentrating on items collectors are looking for.

Most importantly, all books are sold for 20% off cover price. That's right off the top.

How does the service work?: We maintain a standing order for you. Each shipping period, we run an invoice against that standing order and your items are picked and packed automatically. The charges are added up and deducted from your account in which you maintain your funds. It's that simple, and there's lots more to it! Look at these features!

1.) NO SEPARATE SECURITY DEPOSITS ARE REQUIRED. Every cent you deposit in your account goes toward buying comics and magazines.

2.) THERE ARE NO MINIMUM OR MAXIMUM ORDERS. Order one comic or one thousand comics . . . we'll get them to you just the same! In keeping with our policy of information, however we do want to note that it's more economical the more titles you order. That's because postage for one comic and postage for ten comics are essentially the same. Postage goes by weight of the package, you know.

3.) YOU HAVE INSTANT CREDIT BASED ON YOUR DEPOSIT. As each shipment is sent out to you you can monitor the level of your account and replenish it if necessary.

4.) IF YOU DON'T WISH TO BE BOTHERED WITH MAKING DEPOSITS, YOU CAN USE VISA. Our Visa system is excellent for a number of reasons:

a.) We operate your account automatically and you NEVER have to worry about having sufficient funds to cover shipments.

b.) U.S. AND FOREIGN CUSTOMERS TAKE NOTE: When you operate your account via VISA, it is done in CANADIAN DOLLARS at the CANADIAN COVER PRICES of the books. Often, with the rates of exchange fluctuating, this may mean EXTRA savings to you when you get your bills!

c.) VISA charges are done in $100 Canadian increments to men mum balance and you receive your sales slip automatically when a charge is processed.

5.) WE'LL WATCH OUR SHIPPING CHARGES AGAINST ANYONE! Traditionally our postal charges have been low and this is maintained through operation of your account. We try to minimize the costs to give the most economical and effective service.

6.) WE CARRY AS COMPLETE A LINE OF GOODS AS POSSIBLE. Our selection has still been more restricted, but rarely escaped. Scan the publications list below! This will be updated from time to time to keep current with the newest releases. If a title doesn't appear on that list, then likely it's not much interest! (Or at least it isn't yet appearing on the list shown only CURRENT or CONFIRMED TITLES.)

7.) OUR RECEIPT SYSTEM IS ACCURATE. We MAINTAIN A COMPUTERIZED SYSTEM FOR YOU! On each and every invoice you see a statement which puts to the balance from the previous invoice. It also shows any deposits, adjustments, or charges which have taken place in your account since the last time you received goods. Everything is clear and concise, and it's in plain English for most of the words you understand!

8.) OUR SCHEDULE IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE! WE SHIP EVERY TWO WEEKS WITHOUT FAIL. That means that every new release we receive in each two week period is shipped out effectively and quickly. Every eight two-week service to minimize the time lag between release of a book and the time you get it!

9.) OUR SYSTEM IS FLEXIBLE. Order changing is a snap. Just drop us a note when you wish to make additions or deletions. We'll make them for you within a day or two of receiving your written notification, and the changes will take effect with your very next order! It's that easy!

10.) OUR SYSTEM IS SIMPLE. There are no complex shopping plans or combinations to choose from and you're not called according to the number of books you take each month, week, or whenever! Too much hassle!

11.) WE CARE FOR YOUR ORDER! Our desire is to get you your books in the best possible condition. Each shipment is carefully wrapped in plastic. Larger shipments are then placed in a specially designed mailing box, with ample packing and a protective bag over it. We are introducing the use of specially padded envelopes for the smaller shipments. This ensures arrival of your books in the best possible condition that makes you happy and that makes us happy too!

12.) WE OFFER FREE SERVICE! If you wish to order any of the following sales, we'd be glad to hear from you as present! You can get in touch with us by phone at (204) 586-7920 during regular business hours (central time) Monday thru Friday! Make changes, ask questions, tell us your suggestions, or whatever. We wanna hear from you!

13.) WE OFFER BACK ISSUE SERVICE AT ECONOMICAL PRICES. We have 500,000 or more books to choose from which span the past 45 years. We offer good quality, good selection, and reasonable price. Oftentimes we run specials just for comic service members! Try us with your want lists. We respond!

14.) OUR "BLANKET CATEGORIES." make ordering easy! A blanket category gives you the option of ordering, for example, "ALL MARVEL FIRST ISSUES" (See the publications list.) That means that each and every first issue will be sent to you automatically! It's then easy to let us know if you wish to continue with the title, without missing an issue! And for MARVELS, the system is even better. If you choose, for example, "ALL DC ANNUALS," you'll get every one that comes out during the year! But even if you don't our system and AUTOMATICALLY send you the annuals of the titles you collect to keep your sets complete! Can't be beat!

These are just a few of the features of our service! Read on!

What basic costs are involved again?: You pay only for your comics at a 20% DISCOUNT, postage, and a small service charge per shipment. Scared? Don't be! The maximum service charge is .75¢ per shipment, and we have recently refined the system to allow for a graduated service charge for small shipment. Awe all, it's not fair to have one comic costing a fortune! This allows smaller collectors to get the best service possible while keeping costs to a minimum!

What EXTRAS does the service offer?: We've got plenty! Just look at these:

1.) WANT A PRICE GUIDE? OK . . . we'll give you one. That's RIGHT! We sand GIVE. OK . . . what's the catch? The only thing is that you have to be a member of the comic service for the year's period in which the guide comes out. THERE ARE NO OTHER MINIMUM ORDERS TO QUALIFY FOR A GUIDE! And what happens if you quit before the year is up? Well . . . we've divided the cost of the guide into 12 equal parts. If you leave the service, your account will be charged for the cost remaining of the guide. It's that simple! The next guide comes out in the spring, so don't be left out!

2.) ARE YOU INTO PLASTIC BAGS? OK . . . we experimented and found that sending books in individual bags is actually MORE dangerous than sending them without. There's greater tendency to damage that way! But we have them available, and they're top quality 7.5 mil ultra clear bags. Service members can get them for just $3.00 U.S./4.00 Can. per hundred!

3.) Once a month you'll get the newest issue of the STVX MAGAZINE. That's something that we started which replaces the old newsletter. It's got previews, cover repros, information on the service and the world of comics, and (hopefully) contributions from service members . . . all neatly fitted into a few pages. Good reading, and it's free!

4.) EACH MONTH we send out as many promotional flyers, mimeo-boo sheets, etc. as we can possibly get into your package. So every second package you'll be getting more than just your books! You'll get the latest updates and info right from the publishers!

5.) MARVELS, AGE and the NEW DC COMBO ATTRACTIONS are supplied free each month to members with current accounts. That's right . . . no cost! That's just a little extra that we give you!

AH OPEN INVITATION TO FORMER MEMBERS: Did you STVX COMIC SERVICE leave us a few years ago? Well, we're back! Why not join with us in the past? If you did and you're not joining us now, may I suggest that you give us a try again? We are also canvassing for ANYONE who may have had any problems with the old incarnation of the comic service. Because we want to clear up any loose ends! Have you been confused by the 1981 mail strike? Well come on out of hiding and let us know so's we can fix the problem!

Publications List: There are no complex shopping plans or combinations to choose from and you're not called according to the number of books you take each month, week, or whenever! Too much hassle!

How to Order: Ordering is a snap! Just drop us a note when you wish to make additions or deletions. We'll make them for you within a day or two of receiving your written notification, and the changes will take effect with your very next order! It's that easy!

Sample Issues: We are now offering sample issues of many titles. Check the publications list below! This will be updated from time to time to keep current with the newest releases. If a title doesn't appear on that list, then likely it's not much interest! (Or at least it isn't yet appearing on the list shown only CURRENT or CONFIRMED TITLES.)

Current Publications List: Please note that we are not responsible for typographical errors. Also, we are not responsible for publication changes. Publication info is subject to change without notice. Please check publication info with your local dealer.

Publications Not Listed: If you don't see a publication listed that you would like to receive, please write us and we will be glad to add it to our list.

Publications Not Available: We are not able to supply publications that are not listed.

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___ MARVEL GRAPHIC NOVELS
___ ALL DC MINI-SERIES
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___ ARCHIE/RED CIRCLE FIRST ISSUES
___ ARCHIE GIANT SERIES MAGAZINE
___ ARCHIE
___ ARCHIE AND ME
___ ARCHIE AT RIVERDALE HIGH
___ ARCHIE'S JOKE BOOK
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___ BETTY AND ME
___ BETTY AND VERONICA
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___ EVERYTHING'S ARCHIE
___ THE FLY (Red Circle)
___ ROSIE AND THE PUSSYCATS
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___ RICHIE'D'S JOKES
___ KATY KEENE (mini series!)
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___ LIFE WITH ARCHIE
___ LITTLE ARCHIE
___ MIGHTY CRUSADERS (Red Circle)
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___ SABRINA
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___ DARKLON THE MYSTIC (Pacific)
___ EDGE OF CHAOS (Pacific)
___ ELRIC (Pacific)
___ GROO (Pacific)
___ ALIEN WORLDS (Pacific)
___ BERNIE WRIGHTSON (Pacific)
___ CAPTAIN VICTORY (Pacific)
___ DNA AGENTS (Eclipse)
___ PACIFIC PRESENTS (Pacific)
___ MR. MYSTIC (Pacific)
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___ THOMAS HOLMES (Pacific)
___ DESTROYER DUCK (Eclipse)
___ VANGUARD (Pacific)
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___ SABRE (Eclipse)
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___ SKATEMAN (Pacific)
___ WHISPER (Capital)
___ BLACK DIAMOND (Americomics)
___ CAPT. PARADOX (Americomics)
___ JUSTICE MACHINE (Texas)
___ JOHN LAW (Eclipse)
___ AZ (Comico)
___ COMICO PRIMER (Comico)
___ GRENDEL (Comico)
___ EVANGELINE (Comico)
___ MAGE (Comico)
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___ GHOSTLY HAUNTS
___ GHOSTLY TALES
___ HUNTED (Baron Werewulf)
___ SCARY TALES
___ WAR (World at ___)
___ SECTION 5: BRITISH/EAGLE COMICS
___ JUDGE DREDD***
___ BORDERLINE!***
___ WARRIOR MAGAZINE
___ SECTION 6: COMIC DIGESTS
___ ALL DC DIGESTS
___ ALL ARCHIE DIGESTS
___ ARCHIE RIVERDALE ALL-7 DIGEST
___ ARCHIE COMICS DIGEST
___ BEST OF DC DIGEST
___ ARCHIE DOUBLE DIGEST
___ BETTY/VERONICA COMIC DIGEST
___ JOKEBOOK COMICS DIGEST
___ JUGHEAD JONES DIGEST
___ JUGHEAD WITH ARCHIE DIGEST
___ LAUGH COMICS DIGEST
___ LITTLE ARCHIE DIGEST
___ SECTION 7: ALTERNATIVE COMICS, FANZINES, AND MAGAZINES
___ AMAZING STORIES (sf)
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___ CINEMAGIC (Film Staring)
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___ FIRST KINGDOM (Plant)
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___ HEAVY METAL SPECIALS
___ HUSTLER (adults only)
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___ JOURNEY (Aardvark-Vanaheim)
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___ MAD SPECIALS
___ MARVEL COMICS INDEX SERIES (Pacific)
___ MARVEL SUPER SPECIAL (Marvel)
___ NATIONAL LAMPOON
___ NATIONAL LAMPOON SPECIALS
___ NEIL THE HORSE (Aardvark-Vanaheim)
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___ ROCKET'S BLAST (NMP occasional)
___ SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN (Marvel)
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___ STARLOG MAGAZINE
___ STEVE CANYON (Kitchen Sink)
___ SWORDS OF CEREBUS (Aardvark Vanaheim)
___ TREK MAGAZINE (NMP)
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YOU ARE CARRIED TO A LEDGE ON A HIGH MOUNTAIN....
THIS IS A NIGHTMARE I MUST WAKE UP!
THERE IS ANOTHER CREATURE PRONE ON A ROCK! ITS SKULL IS OPEN -- AND EMPTY! THEN, TO YOUR HORROR, YOU SOMEHOW REALIZE THAT THIS BEING
YOU SCREAM -- HOPING THAT SOME ONE IN YOUR NORMAL WORLD OF CONSCIOUSNESS WILL HEAR AND AWAKEN YOU!
I'M LIKE THAT WHEN I'M DREAMING TOO! I DID TRANSPLANT MY BRAIN!

© 1962 by S.P.M. Publications, Inc.

"Nightmare World" had art by Basil Wolverton, who also did the cover of the third issue of ***Weird Tales of the Future****, in which it appeared. The story's end returns the character to the real world — but trapped in the bat-monster's body. "Your long-sought formula has resulted in much more than just a nightmare!"*

pattern: place-name of synonym-for-fright. *Witches Tales* was copied from the Haunt of Fear's hostess, the Old Witch. *Black Cat Mystery* was a switched-over super-hero title — otherwise it, too, probably would have had an EC-type title. All four titles were made to look like ECs, so much so that EC used to get mail complaining about the poor quality of Harvey's comics — because Harvey's comics weren't very good.

In fact, *most* of the horror comics weren't very good. After all, with 500 titles on the stands at a time when comics work didn't pay very well, the available talent was stretched to the limit. The handful of really good artists couldn't produce anywhere near enough work to satisfy the immense demand. As the field expanded, more and more artists and writers were needed, and that meant that second-rate, third-rate, and fourth-rate talent could find work.

EC did well, partly because it made a serious effort, always, to keep the quality high, to get the very best art and story it could. Its imitators, however, didn't always understand that — and even those who understood it didn't try to imitate it much, because quality costs money.

Instead, the dozens of small publishers looked for gimmicks, for ways to make their stuff sell even if it wasn't nearly as good as EC or DC. 3-D was one such gimmick; it came and went in the second half of 1953.

There was another tendency, however. A budding publisher would look at EC, and, after dismissing quality as unimportant or too expensive, would look for what *else* made EC — or other horror comics — sell.

Surprise endings were one thing; everybody tried to write surprise endings. Unfortunately, that's much harder to do than it appears, and that wasn't always successful.

Overwritten, moody captions were a basic part of the EC style, so hundreds of comics appeared with overwritten captions, often using EC-type gimmicks like writing entirely in the second person (e.g., "You rise from your grave and look out across the village . . . ").

Horror hosts were part of the pattern, and some truly abysmal hosts appeared — I mean, WALTER WEREWOLF? Give me a break!

Horror hosts were part of the pattern, and some truly abysmal hosts appeared — I mean, *Walter Werewolf*? Give me a break! He appeared in *Horrific*, published by Comic Media, one of the small publishers heavily into horror. Besides Walter Werewolf, it had The Teller, Freddie Demon, Victor Vampire, and Garry Ghoul, all in the one title! There were more hosts than stories!

Most of all, though, other publishers looked at EC and saw that EC comics were violent and gory. Axe-murderers abounded. In EC comics, characters were stabbed, burned, strangled, hanged, chopped to pieces, eaten, boiled, and done to death in a dozen other gruesome ways.

EC, however, generally showed some restraint; the reader didn't actually *see* the husband chopping his wife's head off. Instead, one panel would show the enraged husband with the upraised axe, and the next would show him standing over his wife's body — the wounds carefully off-panel — with the axe-blade dripping blood. Only rarely did we actually see the dimembered corpse or whatever, and we *never* saw the actual dismemberment. This usually made the stories all the more effective.

The imitators, however, didn't see that. If they ever noticed that EC kept most of the gore offstage, they must have decided that EC was just timid and they could do better by moving it right into full view.

Therefore, horror comics began to show more gore, more violence, ever more explicitly. It became a matter of

topping what had come before; if one issue showed a man killing his wife, the next would top that by having him hack his wife to pieces, and the next would top *that* by having him eat her corpse!

Not all publishers did this; DC, for example, stayed clean, as did several others — Ziff-Davis, Quality, and so on.

This may seem pretty incredible to modern comic-book readers, who grew up in more recent times, but back in the early Fifties there were no rules about what you could show in a comic book. There were no underground comics or black-and-white magazines, because you could put just about anything you wanted into regular four-color comics.

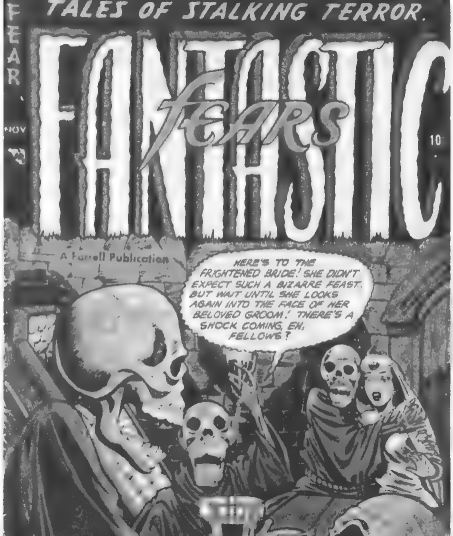
There were some limits, of course. Raw sex would have put a publisher out of business overnight. Violence and horror, however, were different, perhaps because they had increased gradually from a point that was obviously acceptable to being really offensive. Horror comics back then got just as grotesque as splatter movies have now — in fact, more so. (Movies are able to use their far greater realism to produce an impact where the same thing in a comic book would fall flat. A movie can show a dozen graphic stabbings without losing its effect; in a comic book, where the picture is static, the reader would be bored by the third one.) Comic-book writers and artists had to keep coming up with ever more bizarre and shocking stories.

Take, just for example, "The Body-Maker" in *Black Cat Mystery* #39, wherein a hunchback sets out to make for himself the perfect woman, by killing women for parts and assembling them *a la* Frankenstein. The reader is treated to scenes of severed legs being kept alive in a vat, one of the victims lying dead with her hands cut off, and so on. *This* is for kids to read?

Or "The Bone Man," in *Horror from the Tomb* #1 — an all-around splendid issue for fans of the grotesque — wherein the expert in charge of assembling fossil skeletons for a museum is fired and takes revenge by cutting up the museum directors, boiling the flesh from the bones, and setting up their skeletons as an exhibit labeled "Board of Directors — EXTINCT." Oh, yes, he throws in his ex-girlfriend, as well.

Superior, a Canadian publisher, produced the strangest and most bizarre stories I've encountered yet — not the goriest or grossest or most shocking, but the weirdest. For example, "So Cold A Tomb," in *Journey into Fear* #5, is about a woman returned from the grave who can't get warm — in her attempts to drive away the chill of the tomb, she burns down houses and kills their inhabitants, walks through fire, and finally climbs into a furnace and is destroyed.

Or "The Flat Man," about a man who


TALES OF STALKING TERROR.
FEAR
NOV
FANTASTIC
FEARS
10
A Farrell Publication
HERE'S TO THE FRIGHTENED BRIDE! SHE DIDN'T EXPECT SUCH A BIZARRE FEAST. BUT WAIT UNTIL SHE LOOKS AGAIN INTO THE FACE OF HER BELOVED GROOM! THERE'S A SHOCK COMING, EH, FELLOWS?

Fantastic Fears #4 (Nov. 1953) is © 1953 by Four Star Publications, Inc.

is accidentally run over by a steamroller and somehow survives.

Or "Club Horror," a gambling casino where each chip is a year of the gambler's life.

Superior's stuff was incidentally gory; some other publishers were intentionally gory. Story Comics, for example, produced *Fight Against Crime* and *Mysterious Adventures*, just crammed with blood and gore.

And Harvey — well, in Robert M. Overstreet's *Comic Book Price Guide*, Harvey's *Chamber of Chills* is described as follows:

NOTE: *This title is filled with bondage, torture, sadism, perversion, gore, canibalism, eyes ripped out, acid in face, etc.*

That description is accurate, and could apply to *any* of Harvey's horror titles. Ajax/Farrell and Stanmor/Aragon were two other publishers notable for their vile stories.

EC's writers and artists, of course, produced their share of really revolting stories, and I would be remiss if I didn't mention a few of their lapses of taste.

The classic is "Foul Play," which appeared in *Haunt of Fear* #19, wherein a vicious baseball player is literally taken apart by an opposing team, and the pieces are used as equipment for the most appalling midnight baseball game ever seen, in comics or anywere else.

EC also sometimes got carried away in striving for eye-catching covers, most notably on *Crime SuspenStories* #20, a graphic depiction of a hanged man; *Crime SuspenStories* #22, showing a man holding his wife's severed head; and *Vault of Horror* #30, showing a severed arm hanging from the strap on a

subway.

Much of EC's goriest material appeared, not in the regular horror titles, but in *Crime SuspenStories* and its companion, *Shock SuspenStories*, which brings me to another point worth making.

The exact line between horror and other genres was often somewhat vague. EC's *Crime SuspenStories*, for example, was superficially all crime stories, with no element of the supernatural, yet it was the company's goriest, most gruesome title overall. No cops-and-robbers, but lots of stories of hideous revenge, ghastly murders, and so forth. Other companies imitated this, just as they had imitated the horror titles; perhaps the best example is Story's *Fight Against Crime*, which tried very hard (and unsuccessfully) to be just like *Crime SuspenStories*.

As well as mixing horror and crime, which is fairly reasonable, the comics also often mixed horror with science fiction. This was in keeping with the tenor of the times, as any fan of the old monster movies can tell. If Hollywood considered science fiction to be little more than a branch of horror, as evidenced by such films as *Attack of the Crab Monsters*, it's hardly surprising that the comics should produce such hybrids as *Weird Tales of the Future* or Ziff-Davis' *Weird Thrillers*. Even EC's *Weird Fantasy* and *Weird Science* often ran stories that bordered on horror, and some stories in *Tales from the Crypt* (*Crypt of Terror* had changed titles with the fourth issue) and *Vault of Horror* came close to being SF. At least the people at EC knew the difference; one gets the impression that many of the people producing comic books genuinely didn't make a distinction and saw both SF and horror entirely in terms of mad scientists and alien monsters.

I ignore such obscure hybrids as *Monster Crime* and *Space Western* and the issues of *Bobby Benson's B-Bar-B Riders* where Bobby battled mad scientists.

Obviously, the heyday of horror ended long ago. How did it happen? *Was* the horror craze just another passing fad?

No, it wasn't — or at least, it didn't die naturally. Whether it might have faded away eventually, we'll never know, because it was cut short. Horror sales were beginning to decline slightly by 1954, so it may be that it would all have come an end in any case, but it was censorship that actually put a stop to horror comics.

At the beginning of this article, I mentioned that some people don't appreciate horror stories. One of them was a well-known psychiatrist and author, Dr. Fredric Wertham. As William Gaines put it in testifying before a Senate committee on comic books, "It would be just as difficult to explain the harmless thrill of a horror story to Dr. Wertham as it would be to explain the sublimity of love to a frigid old maid."

This was not, perhaps, the best approach to take when talking to a Senate committee in the paranoid and puritanical Fifties — they probably didn't approve of sex, either.

At any rate, Dr. Wertham and his compatriots waged war against horror comics — and in Wertham's case against virtually all other comics, as well — from the late Forties onward. Articles appeared in *Reader's Digest*. Wertham's book, *Seduction of the Innocent*, sold well, despite the fact that its whole argument was flawed. He argued that, since every juvenile delinquent read comics and every slow learner read comics, comics caused juvenile delinquency and illiteracy. This ignored the fact that in those pre-television days *all* kids read comics!

This campaign was eventually successful; it led to the aforementioned Senate investigation. Incredible as it may seem, in 1954 the U.S. Senate considered comic books important enough to rate a full-blown investigation, culminating in the hearings whence I got the quote from Gaines.

Incredible as it may seem, in 1954 the U.S. Senate considered comic books important enough to rate a full-blown investigation.

No legal action was actually taken, by the Senate or anybody else. Instead, several the comic-book publishers joined to establish the Comics Code Authority, a self-censorship organization that read each comic before publication and either approved or rejected it — or in some cases requiring changes before granting approval. Sex and violence were blotted out wherever they might be found.

The Authority, incidentally, did something else — it put out of business the smaller companies that relied on horror and crime for their survival. EC, Story, and Superior, among others, faded away. It may well be that this is exactly what the major comic publishers had in mind when they organized the CCA; it certainly cut the competition and improved their profits.

Even of the companies that survived the Code, though, a great many went under a year or two later when the national magazine distribution system underwent a major upheaval.

How could a "voluntary" organization put publishers out of business? Simple; the distributors and wholesalers refused to carry comics that didn't have the Code seal of approval. That bankrupted many publishers very quickly, and put an abrupt end to the horror boom.

A few companies ignored the Code and survived anyway. Ironically, the only ones who managed it were the ones which were so clean to begin with that nobody could object to their stuff, either with the seal or without. Dell was one such, Gilberton (*Classics Illustrated*) was another.

Thus, in 1955, horror comics ceased to exist. The few cleaned-up titles that survived, with Code approval, were no longer called horror comics — the very word "horror," along with "crime," "terror," and "weird," had been banned from comic-book covers. DC had its mystery titles, Atlas its monster books, but horror comics were gone. The walking dead were forbidden under the Code, and 20 years later that meant Marvel had to call zombies "zuvembies" in their superhero titles in order to dodge that rule. Nudity was banned. Dismemberment was out. Vampires and werewolves could only be used "in the traditional manner." There was even a requirement that female characters not be too sexy.

Comics fandom had made a tentative beginning during the horror boom, centered on EC; when EC and horror went under, fandom sank back into nothing — until DC began actively reviving the super-heroes.

Horror was not utterly forgotten; in the Sixties, Warren began its line of black-and-white magazines, which were not subject to the Comics Code, in imitation of EC's titles. In the years since there have been other attempts at revival. No matter how successful some of these may be, though, never again will the world see such an outpouring of horror comics of every imaginable description.

Never again will the world see such an outpouring of horror comics of every imaginable description.

The early Fifties were a unique time, when the market was large enough and young enough for anybody to make money peddling horror, and that brought a torrent of material, much of which couldn't be marketed nowadays. The pre-Code horror comics could be naive, sophisticated, sleazy, flashy, boring, grotesque, exquisite, horrifying, laughable, and repulsive. They swiped

PLAY BALL BATTERY!
LET'S GO PHILLY BOY! HIGH IT IN
AND IN THE BOTTOM OF THE NINTH, WITH THE BASES LOADED AND TWO OUT, THE PHILLIES' BATTERY OF GRIFFITH AND BARTELLE IS RUSHED IN TO RELIEVE THE STARTER. THEY NEVER FOUND THE WEAPON BALL? BYE, HOW WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN MY SHED, TALES FROM THE CRYPT!

The Haunt of Fear #19 (May-June 1963) is © 1963 by Fables Publishing Company, © 1983 by William M. Gaines.

"Foul Play!" — with art by Jack Davis — was the closing story in ***The Haunt of Fear*** *#19 (May-June 1953). It has been repeatedly singled out as an example of excessively gory comics — but the effect was muted by coloring the first two panels in yellow and blue (something which makes clear reproduction of the page difficult).*

openly from each other, from the pulps, from the movies, from anywhere, in their desperate search for salable ideas, and openly plagiarized published stories, classic or recent, on the assumption that the copyright owners wouldn't read comics, so that they were safe from discovery. (In most cases they were quite correct; EC, however, printed a story which combined two stories by Ray Bradbury, who complained, and EC wound up paying for the rights and doing official adaptations.)

In the hundreds upon hundreds of horror stories published, most were junk — rarely has Sturgeon's Law, which states "90% of everything is crud," been so well demonstrated — yet there were occasional gems: Those stories so odd, so off-the-wall as to be a real delight; stories so bad they're funny; stories where an artist took the time to do something better than hackwork; stories where a writer happened to touch on something truly frightening; stories so disgusting as to have a perverse fascination.

People who only know the boring, formulaic "mystery" comics or the silly monster books or the tediously gruesome stories that predominated in Warren's output simply have no idea of the variety of comic-book horror, of the heights and depths it reached. Even people who have read EC comics, in either originals or the various reprints, only know a small part of the field. Horror comics could give some kids nightmares for years!

Now, only collectors discover the delights of these monstrous magazines.

Fortunately, although interest has been increasing in recent years, driving the prices up, it's still possible to buy many old horror comics for a couple of dollars apiece. This is because there were so very, very many produced in such a short time. Anyone who takes an interest in old comics should take the time to read a few, just to see what they're like. Any good comic shop or dealer should have a few available.

Be cautious, though; if you're at all squeamish, avoid the more gruesome titles. Many were pretty horrible.

In more ways than one.

The Cost of Collecting:

Because of space limitations, the following list shows only some of the total number of pre-Code horror titles that were published. The list has also been trimmed of many annotations. For a more complete picture of the genre, consult Robert M. Overstreet's ***The Comic Book Price Guide.***

ADVENTURES INTO THE UNKNOWN
Fall, 1948 - No. 174, Aug. 1967 (No. 1 33, 52 pgs.)
American Comics Group

	Good	Fine	Mint
(1st continuous series horror comic)			
1-Guardineer-c; adapt of "Castle of Otranto" by Horace Walpole	14.25	42.50	85.00
2, 4, 5	5.85	17.50	35.00
3-Feldstein-a, 5 pgs.	8.35	25.00	50.00
6-10	3.00	9.00	18.00
11-16, 18-20	2.35	7.00	14.00
17-Story based on movie "The Thing"	3.35	10.00	20.00
21-26, 28-30: 25-A.C.G. staff app	2.00	6.00	12.00
27-Williamson/Krenkel-a, 8 pgs.	12.50	37.50	75.00
31-50	1.70	5.00	10.00
51-59 (3-D effect)	4.00	12.00	24.00
60-Woodesque-s by Landau	1.20	3.50	7.00
61-Last pre-code issh	1.00	3.00	6.00
62-90	.50	1.50	3.00
91, 95, 96 (No. 95 on inside), 107, 116-All contain Williamson-a	2.50	7.00	14.00
92-94, 97-106, 108-115, 117-127. 109-113, 118-Whitney painted-c	.40	1.20	2.40
128-Williamson-a(r) from Forbidden Worlds No. 63	.85	2.25	4.50
129-150	.25	.75	1.40
151-153: 153-Magic Agent app.	—	.50	1.00
154-Nuneuss series begins (origin), ends No. 170	.40	1.20	2.40
155-167, 169-174: 157 Magic Agent app	.30	.80	2.40
168 Ditko-a(p)	.40	1.20	2.40

NOTE: "Spirit of Frankenstein" series in 5, 6, 8-10, 12, 16. Buscema a-100, 16, 108-110, 158r. Craig a-152, 160 Goode a-45, 47, 60 Landau a-59-63.

BLACK CAT MYSTERY (Formerly Black Cat. . . . Western Mystery No. 54; . . . Western No. 55, 56; . . . Mystery No. 57; . . . Mystic

No. 58-62, Black Cat No. 63-65)
No. 30, Aug. 1951 - No. 65, April, 1963
Harvey Publications

30-Black Cat on cover only	4.50	13.00	26.00
31, 32, 34, 35, 37, 38, 40	3.75	11.00	22.00
33	4.50	13.00	26.00
36, 39	11.00	33.00	66.00
41-43	3.50	10.00	20.00
44, 46-49, 51-Nostrand-a in all	3.75	11.00	22.00
45-Classic "Colorama" by Powell; Nostrand-a	6.00	18.00	36.00
50-Check-a; Lee Elias?-c	6.00	18.00	36.00
52, 53 (=No. 34 & 35)	3.50	10.00	20.00
54-Two Black Cat stories	3.75	11.00	22.00
55, 56-Black Cat app.	3.00	9.00	18.00
57 (7/56)-Simon?-c	3.00	9.00	18.00
58-60-Ruby-a(4)	3.75	11.00	22.00
61-Nostrand-a & classic "Colorama" reprinted from 45	3.00	9.00	18.00
62 (3/58)-E.C. story swipe	2.75	8.00	16.00
63-Giant(10/62); Reprints; Black Cat app.; orgin Black Kitten	4.00	12.00	24.00
64-Giant(1/63); Reprints; Black Cat app.	4.00	12.00	24.00
65-Giant(4/63); Reprints; Black Cat app.	4.00	12.00	24.00

Note: Meskin a-51. Palais a-30. 31(2), 32(2), 33, 34, 38-40. Powell a-32-35, 36(2), 40, 41, 43-52, 57. Simon c-63-65.

CHAMBER OF CHILLS (. . . of Clues No. 27 on)
No. 21, June, 1951 - No. 26, Dec, 1954
Harvey Publications/Witches Tales

	Good	Fine	Mint
21	6.00	18.00	36.00
22, 23	4.00	12.00	24.00
24	4.00	12.00	24.00
25-(2/52)	4.00	12.00	24.00
6, 8-10	3.00	9.00	18.00
7	3.70	11.00	22.00
11, 12, 14	2.75	8.00	16.00
13, 15-23-Nostrand-a in all; c-No. 20	5.00	15.00	30.00
26-26	1.70	5.00	10.00

NOTE: Palais a-21(1)-24(4). Powell a-21, 23-26(5?), 6-8, 11, 13, 18-21.

EERIE (Strange Worlds No. 18 on)
No. 1, Jan, 1947; No. 1, May-June, 1951-No. 17, Aug-Sept, 1954
Avon Periodicals
1 (1947)-1st horror comic; Kubert, Fujitani-a

	17.00	50.00	110.00
1 (1951)-Reprints story/'47 No.1	10.00	30.00	60.00
2-Wood c/a	13.50	40.00	80.00
3-Wood-c, Kubert, Wood/Orlando-a	13.50	40.00	80.00
4, 5-Wood-c	12.50	37.50	75.00
6, 13, 14	4.50	13.00	26.00
7-Wood/Orlando-c; Kubert-a	8.00	24.00	48.00
8-Kinstler-a	5.00	15.00	30.00
9-Kubert-a; Check-c	6.00	18.00	36.00
10, 11-Kinstler-a	5.00	15.00	30.00
12-25-pg. Dracula story from novel	7.00	20.00	40.00
15-Reprints No. 1('51)/minus-c	3.00	9.00	18.00
16-Wood-a r/No.2	4.75	14.00	28.00
17-Wood/Orlando & Kubert-a; reprints No. 3 minus inside c/ and/o inside Wood-c	6.00	18.00	36.00

NOTE: Hollingsworth a-9-11; c-10-11.

HORROR FROM THE TOMB (Mysterious Stories No. 2)
Sept. 1954
Premier Magazine Co.
1-Woodbridge/Torres-a 5.00 15.00 30.00

FIGHT AGAINST CRIME (Fight Against the Guilty No. 22)
May, 1951 - No. 21, Sept, 1954
Story Comics

1	3.50	10.00	20.00
2, 3	2.00	6.00	12.00
4	4.35	13.00	26.00
5-Frazetta, 1 pg.	1.50	4.50	9.00
6	2.75	8.00	16.00
7	3.00	9.00	18.00
8-Last crime format issue	1.50	4.50	9.00
9-21	1.70	5.00	10.00

NOTE: No. 9-21 contain E.C. style plot twists and several E.C. swipes.

8-11, 13	3.75	11.00	22.00
12	5.00	15.00	30.00
14-Tothish art by Ross Andru	3.75	11.00	22.00
15	4.35	13.00	26.00
16-E.C. story swipe/Haunt of Fear No. 19; Tothish-a by Ross Andru	4.35	13.00	26.00
17-Wildey E.C. swipe/Shock Suspenstories No. 9	4.35	13.00	26.00
18	3.70	11.00	22.00
19	3.70	11.00	22.00
20	10.00	30.00	60.00
21-E.C. swipe	4.35	13.00	26.00

NOTE: Cameron a-5. Hollingsworth a-3, 9, 10, 13. Wildey a-15, 16.

FORBIDDEN WORLDS (. . . Presents Herbie No. 114, 116)
7-8/51 - No. 34, 10-11/54; No. 35, 8/55 - No. 145, 8/67
(No. 1-5; 52 pgs.; No. 6-8; 44 pgs.)

	Good	Fine	Mint
American Comics Group			
1-Williamson/Frazetta-a, 10 pgs.	30.00	85.00	185.00
2	9.50	28.00	56.00
3-Williamson/Wood-a, 7 pgs.	13.50	40.00	80.00
4	5.75	17.00	34.00
5-Williamson/Krenkel-a, 8 pgs.	12.50	37.50	75.00
6-Harrison/Williamson-a, 8 pgs.	11.00	32.50	65.00
7, 8, 10	3.00	9.00	18.00
9	3.50	10.00	20.00
11-20	2.20	6.50	13.00
21-33	1.50	4.50	9.00
34 (10-11/54) (Becomes Young Heroes No. 35 on)-Last pre-code ish	2.00	5.00	10.00
35 (8/55)-62	1.00	3.00	6.00
63, 68, 76, 78-Williamson-a in all	3.00	9.00	18.00
64, 66-68, 70-72, 74, 75, 77, 79-90	.85	2.50	5.00
65- "There's a New Moon Tonight" listed in No 114 as holding 1st record fan mail response	1.00	3.00	6.00
73-Intro., 1st app. Herbe by Whitney	12.00	36.00	72.00
91-93, 95, 97-100	.70	2.00	4.00
94-Herbie app.	4.00	12.00	24.00
96-Williamson-a	2.50	7.00	14.00
101-109, 111-113, 115, 117-120	.50	1.50	3.00
110, 114, 116-Herbe app. 114 contains list of editor's top 20 ACG stories	2.00	6.00	12.00
121-124; 124-Mage Agent app.	.40	1.20	2.40
125-Mage Agent app., intro. & origin Magicman series, ends No. 141	.50	1.50	3.00
126-130	.40	1.10	2.20
131, 132, 134-141; 135-Nemesus x-over in Magicman. 140-Mark Midnight app by Otiko	.30	.90	1.80
133-Origin & 1st app. Dragona in Magicman (1-2/66); returns No. 138	.30	.90	1.80
142-145	.25	.70	1.40

NOTE: Buscema a-75, 79, 81, 82, 140r Disbrow a-10. Ditko a-137p, 138, 140. Landau a-34, 38, 91-94, 96, 98r, 96, 143-45. Moldoff a-31, 139r. Whitney a-127, 137; c-129.

HORRIFIC (Terrific No. 14 on)
Sept, 1952 - No. 13, Sept. 1954
Artful/Comic Media/Harwell/Mystery

1	4.35	13.00	26.00
2	2.50	7.50	15.00
3	3.75	11.00	22.00
4-7, 9, 10	1.85	5.50	11.00
8-Origin & 1st app. The Teller(E.C. parody)	2.20	6.50	13.00
11 Swipe/Witches Tales No. 6, 27	1.50	4.50	9.00
12, 13	1.50	4.50	9.00

NOTE: Don Heck a-8; c-3-13. Hollingsworth a-4. Morisi a-8. Palais a-8, 11.

JOURNEY INTO FEAR
May, 1951 - No. 21, Sept, 1954
Superior-Dynamic Publications
1-Balsar-a(2)

	8.50	25.00	50.00
2-4	4.35	13.00	26.00
5-10	3.50	10.00	20.00
11	3.75	11.00	22.00
12-14, 16-21	3.00	9.00	18.00
15	5.00	15.00	30.00

NOTE: Feldstein/ish, Kamenish-a most issues. Robinson a-10

MONSTER CRIME COMICS (Also see Crime Must Stop)
October, 1952
Hillman Periodicals
1 (Scarce) 22.00 65.00 140.00

MARVEL TALES (. . . of the Living Dead)
March, 1952 - No. 25, Aug, 1955

Story Comics	Good	Fine	Mint
1	7.00	20.00	40.00
2	3.75	11.00	22.00
3, 4, 6, 9, 10	3.00	9.00	18.00
5	3.75	11.00	22.00
7	3.00	9.00	18.00
8	3.00	9.00	18.00
11 (12/52)	5.75	17.00	34.00
12	5.75	17.00	34.00
13	5.75	17.00	34.00
14, 18, 19	2.20	6.50	13.00
15	5.75	17.00	34.00
16	5.75	17.00	34.00
17	5.75	17.00	34.00
20-used by Wertham in the Senate hearings	5.75	17.00	34.00
21	5.00	15.00	30.00
22-"Cinderella" parody	2.75	8.00	16.00
23-Disbrow-a	3.50	10.00	20.00
24, 25	2.20	6.50	13.00

NOTE: Tothish art by Ross Andru-No. 23, 23. Bache a-8. Cameron a-6, 7. Hollingsworth a-3-8, 12. Schaffenberger a-25. Wildey a-17.

TOMB OF TERROR (Thrills of Tomorrow No. 17 on)
June, 1952 - No. 16, July, 1954
Harvey Publications

	Good	Fine	Mint
1	6.00	18.00	36.00
2	4.45	13.00	26.00
3	5.00	15.00	30.00
4-7	4.35	13.00	26.00
8-12-Nostrand-a	4.35	13.00	26.00
13-Special S/F ish	6.00	18.00	36.00
14-Check-a; special S/F ish	6.00	18.00	36.00
15-S/F ish	7.50	22.50	45.00
16-Special S/F ish; Nostrand-a	6.00	18.00	36.00

NOTE: Palais a-2, 3, 6-7. Powell a-1, 3, 5, 9-15.

WORLD OF MYSTERY (. . . of the Witch)
March, 1952 - No. 8, July-Aug. 1953
S.P.M. Publ. No. 1, 2/Aragon Publ./Stanmor Publ.

1 Andru-a(2)	17.00	50.00	100.00
2, 3-Wolverton-a (3) each	47.00	140.00	285.00
4-"Jumpin' Jupiter" satire by Wolverton; partial Wolverton-c	17.00	50.00	110.00
5-Wolverton-c/a(2)	47.00	140.00	285.00
6-Bernard Baily-c	8.00	24.00	48.00
7-"The Mixed Movers" from the art to Wolverton's "Brain Bats of Venus" from Mr. Mystery No. 7 which was cut apart, pasted up, partially redrawn, and rewritten by Harry Kantor, the editor; Bernard Baily-c	20.00	60.00	120.00
8-Reprints Weird Mysteries No. 1 (10/52) minus cover	7.00	20.00	40.00

WEIRD THRILLERS
Sept-Oct. 1951 - No. 5, Oct-Nove, 1952
Ziff-Davis Publ. Co. (Approved Comics)

	Good	Fine	Mint
1-Rondo Hatton photo-c	8.75	26.00	52.00
2-Toth, Robinson, Colan-a	7.50	22.50	45.00
3-Two Powell, Tuska-a	6.00	18.00	36.00
4-Kubert, Tuska-a	7.50	22.50	45.00
5-Powell-a	6.00	18.00	36.00

NOTE: Anderson a-1-3. Rousseau a-4 No. 2, 3 reprinted in Nightmare No. 10 & 13; No 4, 5 r-/in Amazing Ghost Stories No.? & No. 15.

WITCHES TALES (Witches Western Tales No. 29, 30)
Jan. 1951 - No. 27, Oct, 1954; No. 28, April, 1955
Witches Tales/Harvey Publications

1-Lpg. Powell-a	9.00	27.00	54.00
2, 4, 9, 10	3.00	9.00	18.00
3, 5, 6	4.35	13.00	26.00
7-Tuska-r-name changed to Kohal	4.35	13.00	26.00
8	3.75	11.00	22.00
11-13, 15, 16	3.00	9.00	18.00
14, 17-Powell/Nostrand-a	5.00	15.00	30.00
18-Nostrand-a(2)	5.00	15.00	30.00
19-26-Nostrand-a in all; 23-Wood swipes from Two-Fisted Tales 34	5.00	15.00	30.00
27, 28; 27-r-/No. 6 with diff c. 28-r-/No. 8 with diff c.	2.35	7.00	14.00

NOTE: Nostrand a-17-26; 14, 17 (w/Powell); c-25. Palais a-1, 2, 4(2), 5(2), 7-9, 14, 15, 17. Powell a-3-7, 10, 11, 19-25, 27. Woodbridge c-23, 25. No. 28 whose date of December on cover.

GREEN HORNET

Still at Large!

by Will Murray

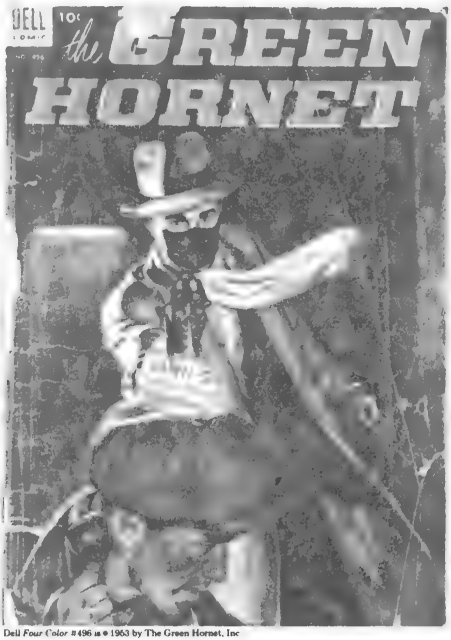
Recently I had the opportunity to relive a part of my youth through the magic of videotape when a friend screened a half dozen episodes of *The Green Hornet* TV show. Seeing those old shows took me back. Once upon a time (during the 1966-67 TV season, to be exact) the height of my adolescent aspirations was to be driven around the benighted, rain-washed streets of Boston by Bruce Lee, with me comfortably ensconced in the back seat of the gleaming Black Beauty and dressed in an elegant green topcoat and plastic mask, the dreaded symbol of The Green Hornet affixed to my emerald brow. While other kids looked up to Batman or Superman, I knew they were fools. Of all the TV superheroes of the day, only The Green Hornet had class.

Of all the TV superheroes of the day, only The Green Hornet had class.

But, instead of tearing around the city, sending crooks scurrying for cover, and attracting 16-year-old girls, I had to content myself with buying every bit of Green Hornet memorabilia I could find — comics, puzzles, a paperback novel by Ed Friend (really Richard Wormser). I still have most of it, nearly 20 years later.

Despite my infatuation with the Van Williams-starring series, my first exposure to the character was not through TV, but rather via the original radio program (which was resurrected, along with *The Shadow* and others, during the Old Time Radio revival of the early Sixties). This is only appropriate; The Green Hornet was born on radio. He was one of the triumvirate of great heroes created during the Depression for George Trendle's WXYZ Detroit. (The other two were *The Lone Ranger* and *Sergeant Preston of the Yukon*.)

Most people who know something about The Green Hornet know he's really newspaper publisher Britt Reid (the son of Dan Reid, who, as a teenager, tagged along with his uncle, The Lone Ranger. Dan was the son of Captain Daniel Reid, one of the Texas Rangers killed at Bryant's Gap, and brother to the unnamed Lone Ranger). While the origin of the Ranger is a part of 20th-Century popular myth, almost no one knows the origin of The Green Hornet.



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Actually, there are two Green Hornet origins — how he was created and how he came to be.

Like The Lone Ranger, The Green Hornet was created by committee, but the initial impetus came from George Trendle, owner of WXYZ. According to Dick Osgood's excellent history of that station, *WYXIE Wonderland* (Popular Press, 1981), Trendle called Fran Striker into his office late in 1935 and handed him a copy of *The Adventures of Jimmie Dale* by Frank L. Packard. Jimmie Dale was a popular mystery character, a bored young millionaire who took, Robin-Hood-like, to robbing crooks in his other identity, The Grey

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Seal — so called because of the diamond-shaped stickers he left behind as a trademark.

Trendle told Striker, who was his head *Lone Ranger* writer and instrumental in developing the character: "Read this. We can do something like this with our new series. *The Lone Ranger* appeals to kids. Now I want to put something on the air to interest young people who are about to vote. I want to do something to show young men how crooked office-holders can be and what they have to do to stop it — that they have to get out and vote and see what's going on in the world, watch things so we can elect candidates to office who will *be* something."

"Kind of expose crime — and set things right — like The Lone Ranger," suggested Striker.

"But modern. Work something out and let me see it."

Striker worked up several scripts, and Trendle rejected one after the other, adding ideas of his own and of his staff, until no one person could honestly lay claim to the final version. It was WXYZ's sales manager, H. Allen Campbell, who came up with the name in a conference with Trendle.

"You tell me this fellow goes out and stings the crooked politicians and the gangsters," Campbell remarked. "Why don't you call him The Bee or The Hornet?"

"Not enough action in a bee," Trendle is reported to have said. "Hornet might be all right. I like that. The Hornet."

Another staff member pointed out there had already been a character by that name, probably referring to the short-lived hero of the 1933 pulp magazine, *The World Adventurer*.

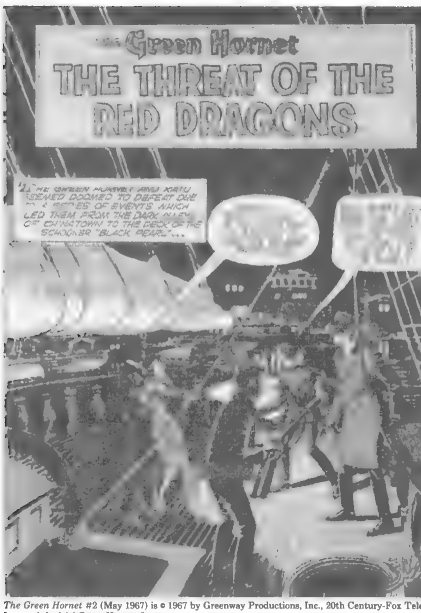
"Well, couldn't you call him some *kind* of hornet and be different?" Campbell asked, and rattled off some suggestions. "The Buzzing Hornet, Green Hornet, Red Hornet with a Sting —"

"Green Hornet. The Green Hornet," Trendle ruminated slowly, tasting the name on his tongue. "That's not bad. *The Green Hornet.*"

Although The Grey Seal may have been the springboard, by the time *The Green Hornet* aired on January 31, 1936 — three years and a day after *The Lone Ranger's* premiere broadcast — it was obvious the new character owed his entire milieu to the cowboy. Where The Lone Ranger had his Tonto, The Green Hornet had a Japanese valet, Kato. Instead of a horse named Silver, there was a supercar named *after* a horse, Black Beauty. Like his ancestor, Britt Reid wore a mask, which caused some people to mistake him for an outlaw. But Britt played upon that perception and pretended to be a super-criminal. It gave him an inside track on the activities of real criminals, even if it did complicate his life where the police were concerned. Because the Lone Ranger never killed with his silver bullets, the Green Hornet was forced to come up with a non-lethal weapon of his own, a gas gun.

As for how The Green Hornet came to be, that's a story whose details were filled in over the years, just as it was with The Lone Ranger. Britt Reid was just a young man when his wealthy father (who had inherited the silver mine from which those famous silver bullets came) turned over control of the family newspaper, the *Daily Sentinel*, to his blond, gray-eyed son.

Britt had already acquired Kato during a visit to Japan, where he saved Kato's life, after which the Oriental offered, as was custom, to become Britt's servant. But Kato was more than a mere valet; he possessed an unusually inventive mind. Together, the two worked in a secret workshop in the livery stable next to Reid's apartment house, where they developed a number of crime-fighting devices and a car they believe would be the most advanced in the world. Because it was constructed in


The Green Hornet
THE THREAT OF THE RED DRAGONS
HE GREEN HORNET AND KATO NERVED DASHED TO DIRECT ONE A SERIES OF EVENTS WHICH LED THEM FROM THE DARK ALLEY OF CHINATOWN TO THE DECK OF THE SCHOONER "BLACK PEARL"...

The Green Hornet #2 (May 1967) is © 1967 by Greenway Productions, Inc., 20th Century-Fox Television, Inc., and the [sic] Green Hornet, Inc.

a stable, the car was dubbed "Black Beauty." It was to be Britt's steed in his coming battle against crime.

He'd found he enjoyed exposing criminals as the owner of the *Sentinel*, but too many malefactors were operating within the law and were therefore out of his reach. He decided to go after them on their own turf.

During the Black Beauty's first test drive, Britt and Kato managed to get the goods on a known criminal, but in the process their unique car was linked to a gangland murder. The unknown owner of the Black Beauty became a wanted felon on police records. But it was a setback Britt turned to his advantage, and his schemes to expose criminals by muscling in on their action and then setting them up for the cops without getting caught (and without ruining The Hornet's notorious reputation) gave the series its gritty, exciting tone.

There are two versions of how the name "Green Hornet" was coined. One awkward explanation had it that Britt wore a green cloth mask, rustler-style, over his lower face and, during one nocturnal foray, the Black Beauty's horn went crazy, producing an insect-like buzzing, which prompted a passerby to come up with the famous *nom de guerre*. A simpler explanation said that Britt took the name because green hornets were the angriest and most prone to sting — which ties in with Trendle's idea of a crime-buster who "stings" crooks.

But these were probably revisions of the origin used in later scripts. An examination of the earliest Green Hornet scripts reveals that the show was originally broadcast as *The Adventures of the Hornet*. In the first episode, Reid has already been anonymously active in his unnamed super-silent car. Then Kato — spelled Cato at that time — adds a buzzing horn.

"It sounds like the buzzing of a giant insect threatening to sting," Britt says. "Maybe changes in design might make your mask more like buzzing insect," Cato adds.

"That's it, Cato! An insect! The Hornet! That's the insect!"

"Name Hornet sound good."

"The *Sentinel* can spread the name 'The Hornet' far and wide! It will be made a name to strike terror to the hearts of lawbreakers. It will be on everyone's lips!"

"Sting of hornet is very painful. Make large bump," said Kato.

"Sting of hornet is very painful. Make large bump," finishes Kato, sounding a lot like a certain Indian.

The name became The Green Hornet in a later episode. But the gas gun and a jade ring with a Hornet emblem were there from the beginning. At first, The Hornet was given to laughing in imitation of The Shadow, but that affectation was abandoned. Kato never changed. He always wore chauffeur's black and goggles. Like Tonto, he was a character of few words, carried a knife, and was the brain behind the hero.

Al Hodge, later TV's Captain Video, was the first Green Hornet. He was replaced in 1943 by Donovan Faust, who lasted only a year before Bob Hall took over. Hall gave way to Jack McCarthy, who stayed with the show from 1946 until it went off the air in 1952. The show had a large supporting cast. There was Dan Reid (played by the same actor who played Tonto, John Todd), Lenore "Casey" Case, Britt's secretary (played by Lee Allman), Commissioner Higgins (Paul Hughes), Ed Lowry, the *Sentinel's* star reporter (Jack Petruzzi), and, of course, Kato.

Originally, Kato was played by a real Japanese, a Detroit restaurant owner named Tokataro Hayashi who worked in radio as a hobby. Hayashi, also known as Raymond Toyo, was well off and didn't take his role seriously. He didn't bother to collect his paychecks and sometimes left town without notice — leaving the Black Beauty without a driver. The fact that he wasn't really an actor hardly mattered; most of his lines were limited to "Yes, Mist' Britt" or "No, Mist' Britt." One time he left Detroit and never returned. This was after Pearl Harbor and after he complained to WXYZ that the U.S. Government was trying to deport him to Japan, a country he'd never visited. It's assumed he was sent to an internment camp, but no one at WXYZ ever heard from him again.

He was replaced by Rollon Parker. Kato's background was modified to explain he was half Filipino and refer-

ences to his Japanese background were subsequently dropped. Some have it this was a direct result of Pearl Harbor, but other sources claim the change began in 1940 in response to Japanese-American friction.

One of the most colorful members of *The Green Hornet* cast was actually a holdover from an earlier program. Mike Axford, the comical Irish cop-turned-bodyguard-to-Britt Reid and sworn enemy of The Hornet, was created for an early WXYZ show called *Warner Lester, Manhunter*. In that show, he was still a cop, but they decided to kill him off in one episode. Public outcry was so strong they had to resurrect him. When *Warner Lester* was cancelled to make way for *The Green Hornet*, Axford was retired from the force and hired by Dan Reid to keep Britt out of trouble. Jim Irwin played the irascible Axford until his death in 1938. Gil Shea then inherited the role.

The Green Hornet's success soon rivaled that of The Masked Rider of the Plains. One reason was the stronger sense of continuity. Scripter Striker didn't allow the same static quality that kept the kids listening to *The Lone Ranger* to infect the more adult show. At first, only Kato knew Reid's secret. Later, Casey and Commissioner Higgins were let in. Dan Reid didn't know, and he once hired a lady detective, Linda Travis, to uncover The Hornet's identity. She was run over just after she learned the truth. Another detective, Oliver Perry, tried for years to unmask The Hornet, but his unscrupulous practices eventually caught up with him.

Eventually, seven years into the series, Britt revealed himself to his father in a powerful scene where listeners were first let in on the fact that The Green Hornet was The Lone Ranger's grand-nephew. (Britt: "I'm carrying on in his tradition, bringing to justice those he would fight if he were here today.") Fran Striker planted a lot of clues before dropping his well-timed bombshell.

Fran Striker planted a lot of clues before dropping his well-timed bombshell.

Inevitably, the character found his way into other media. In 1939, there was a serial starring Gordon Jones as The Hornet and Keye Luke as Kato, Universal's *The Green Hornet*. It was a straight crime yarn pitting Reid against a huge underworld syndicate. For the first time, fans got to *see* their hero. Universal dressed The Hornet in the standard gangster uniform — heavy overcoat, scarf, and snap-brim fedora. Instead of the green cloth mask, Reid wore a face shield of what appeared to be black celluloid. It covered his entire face; only his sinister eyes and the green hornet over his mouth showed. The same outfit was worn by Warren Hull in the 1944 sequel, *The Green Hornet Strikes Again*.

Britt Reid was not quite so snazzy in the comic book named after him, which Harvey Comics launched in December 1940. There, he wore a lime-green trenchcoat, hat, and the radio cloth mask (which sported a *black* hornet emblem), a brown suit, and yellow gloves and scarf. His clothes always looked baggy and his white socks invariably showed. This may have been the fault of the succession of artists, who included Lee Elias. The comic was very faithful to the radio show; Fran Striker's scripts were recycled to insure maximum authenticity. Because it adhered so closely to the original, the Harvey comic was never very exciting. It was too much like the true-crime comics of the time, except for the masked hero. When Harvey folded the book in 1949, that was the end of the adaptations for a while.

Dell did a one-shot comic in 1953 — a year after *The Green Hornet* went off the air, if that makes any sense. This time, Reid wore a black mask with a green insignia. His topcoat and hat were brown. Otherwise, the Dell and Harvey versions were indistinguishable.

With the demise of radio drama, The Green Hornet slipped into oblivion. *The Lone Ranger* stepped over to TV successfully and, after it was cancelled, a *Green Hornet* pilot was filmed in the early Sixties, but it was never aired. Then came the *Batman* TV show. Its runaway success prompted *Batman* producer Bill Dozier to option the old WXYZ crime-buster in 1966.

Dozier, bless his creative heart, chose not to go the camp route with The Hornet and stuck to basics.

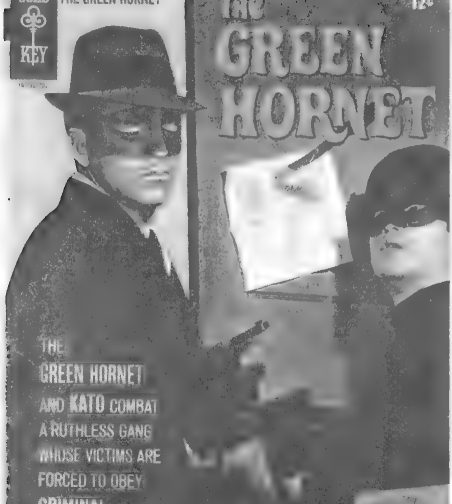
Dozier, bless his creative heart, chose not to go the camp route with The Hornet and stuck to basics. Ignoring the Lone Ranger connection, the new show distilled the essence of the old radio series. Some extraneous characters — Dan Reid and Ed Lowry for instance — were ignored, while Commissioner Higgins was replaced by D.A. Frank Scanlon (Walter Brooke), the only person outside of Casey (the gorgeous Wende Wagner) and Kato to know The Hornet's secret. Lloyd Gough played Mike Axford.

Brown-haired Van Williams was Britt Reid and a very grim Green Hornet, indeed. But the best casting had to be the then-unknown Bruce Lee as Kato. He didn't get much dialogue, but he was fascinating to watch, body coiled tight as a spring by The Hornet's side, he literally flashed into action without warning, unleashing deadly fast kicks, Hornet darts, or nunchaku sticks. The old Kato may have known judo, but Lee gave him a new dimension through gung fu (as Lee spelled it) and introduced the American public to that martial art. Even without dialogue, he stole the show from Williams.

The one concession to the Batman craze was a plethora of Hornet gadgets.

The one concession to the Batman craze was a plethora of Hornet gadgets. There was the gas-firing Hornet gun, the Hornet sting (a telescoping cane for blowing open locked doors with ultrasound), the Hornet watch (a pocket watch/radio), redesigned Hornet stickers, and others. But the biggest and best one of them all was the Black Beauty. In the radio days, it was just another supercar, but the 1966 Chrysler Imperial converted into a limousine by George Barris (and christened "Black Ugly" by Williams) had everything: Front and rear rocket batteries, a sleepgas vent in the grill, a smoke-and-oil nozzle on the rear deck for discouraging pursuit, polarized green headlights, and, of course, bullet-proofing. There was a sort of spy-in-the-sky called the Hornet scanner that flew out of the trunk and relayed TV pictures back to the foldaway controls in the Black Beauty's back seat. (Kato controlled the weapons from the front.) When not in use, the Black Beauty had no parking problems. The Hornet simply drove it into his garage, stepped out and started secret controls. Claws lifted from the floor to grasp retractable bumper rods, then the entire floor *revolved* until Reid's white convertible stood in its place and the Black Beauty hung like a sleeping bat, unseen, beneath the false floor. It was great!

The whole show was great. It premiered on Friday, September 9, 1966, with "The Silent Gun," in which the Hornet had to locate a prototype super-silenced pistol fallen into wicked hands. ("Tell me who has the gun," the masked Van Williams deadpanned to a frightened witness, "and your life is guaranteed. By me. You have my word.") It was one of the last of those dinosaurs,


KEY
THE GREEN HORNET
THE GREEN HORNET AND KATO COMBAT A RUTHLESS GANG WHOSE VICTIMS ARE FORCED TO OBEY CRIMINAL COMMANDS!

The Green Hornet #1 is © 1966 by Greenway Productions, Inc., 20th Century-Fox Television, Inc., and the [sic] Green Hornet, Inc.

the half-hour drama. In fact, the first show was announced as an hour, but evidently was cut. No origin was given. The number of later two-parters makes me wonder if the series hadn't been planned as an hour originally.

Most of the episodes were straight crime drama. There were no recurring villains and little humor. The Hornet fought underworld types — an arsonist, crooks with a stolen tank, more crooks with a purloined laser, and the inevitable Hornet impersonator.

In one great episode, he and Kato tangled with a Chinatown tong, and we got to see Bruce Lee waste Mako, machinegunning kung fu chops to his solar plexus. Mako blinked, tottered, and keeled over. It wasn't until the final episodes, a two-parter with a Victor Buono look-alike as the nuclear hijacker Dr. Mabuse (a name stolen from German silent serials) and accompanied by a girl who threw lightning from her fingernails, that Dozier made a frantic stab at campy plots. But I forgive him that and absolve him of guilt in the silly crossover story in *Batman*, because he had the courage to play the character straight. And he managed to work The Hornet's both-ends-against-the-middle tactics into every half hour. No mean feat.

Oh, there were some purists who applauded when *The Green Hornet* went off the air, because Dozier had dared to tamper with the radio concepts. Mostly they complained about the new mask. It was of green plastic (a shade brighter than the tastefully subdued topcoat and fedora) with a striking hornet on the brow. (Van Williams complained, too. The first mask had a Roman nose, arched eyebrows, and inhibited peripheral vision. During the first three episodes, Williams went through ten masks until they poured one from a mold of his face. Bruce Lee had the same problem.) But I like to think Dozier, producer Richard Bluel, and the scripters only augmented the original George Trendle/Fran Striker vision and, more importantly, they did it with *style*.

Otherwise, why would someone like me, nearly twenty years later, occasionally fall into moods where I throw Al Hirt's jazzed-up version of the Hornet theme, "Flight of the Bumblebee," onto my stereo, dig out my copies of the TV-inspired 1966 Gold Key Dan Spiegle *Green Hornet* comic, and let my mind drift back to that *film noir* time when Bruce Lee and I would pile into our sleek street dreadnaught and roar off into the eternal adolescent night? ("Stick to the back alleys, Kato. They're cordoning off Chinatown.")

At the end of *The Green Hornet* radio show, just before announcer Mike Wallace (who took what he learned from Britt Reid of investigative journalism with him when he joined *60 Minutes)* came on, a *Sentinel* newsboy wrapped up the latest story by shouting the day's headline. It was always about the latest alleged depredation of his secret employer and invariably ended with this tagline: "Green Hornet still at large!"

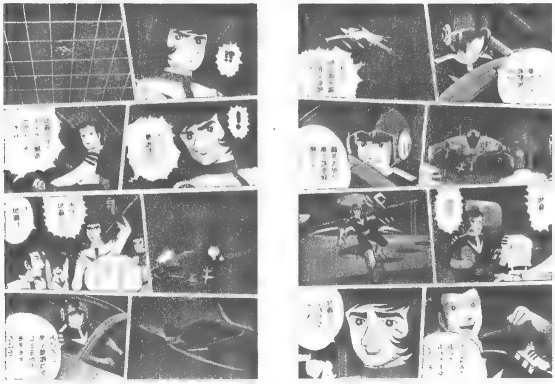
I like to think Britt Reid *is* still patrolling our streets, whatever mask he wears, and that, even though he and Kato are getting a trifle long in the tooth, they haven't stopped outwitting crooks and cops and Mike Axford alike, and maybe — just maybe — they're training a new member of the Reid clan to take over the family business.

The Green Hornet on TV

1) The Silent Gun	*9/9/66*
2) Give 'Em Enough Rope	*9/16/66*
3) Programmed for Death	*9/23/66*
4) Crime Wave	*9/30/66*
5) The Frog Is a Deadly Weapon	*10/7/66*
6) Eat, Drink, and Be Dead	*10/14/66*
7) Beautiful Dreamer (part 1)	*10/21/66*
8) Beautiful Dreamer (part 2)	*10/28/66*
9) The Key Is for Killing	*11/11/66*
10) The Preying Mantis	*11/18/66*
11) The Hunters and the Hunted	*11/25/66*
12) Deadline for Death	*12/2/66*
13) The Secret of Sally Bell	*12/9/66*
14) Freeway to Death	*12/16/66*
15) May the Best Man Lose	*12/23/66*
16) The Firefly	*1/6/67*
17) Corpse of the Year (part 1)	*1/13/67*
18) Corpse of the Year (part 2)	*1/20/67*
19) Ace in the Hole	*2/3/67*
20) Bad Bet on a 459-Silent	*2/10/67*
21) Trouble for Prince Charming	*2/17/67*
22) Alias "The Scarf"	*2/24/67*
23) Hornet, Save Thyself	*3/3/67*
24) Invasion from Outer Space (part 1)	*3/10/67*
25) Invasion from Outer Space (part 2)	*3/17/67*
Also: Two parter on *Batman: A Piece of the Action*	*3/1/67*
Batman's Satisfaction	*3/8/67*

Space Cruiser Yamato

Japanese animated cartoon TV series and movies present rich, if contradictory, space adventures



*This two-page spread is from the **Arrivederci Yamato** anime comics set from Akita Shoten's "Champion Graphics" line (1981). The **Cosino Tiger** fighter squad joins the **Yamato**. (Note: The Japanese pages have been flopped for better reader comprehension.)*

By Ardith Carlton

She rose from the depths of the history books, a World War II battleship revived in the year 2199 to save the world from a rather gooey and gruesome end. Borne on wings of Japanese ink and celluloid, the animated Space Cruiser Yamato not only managed to rescue Earth, but also earned a half-dozen encore missions in the decade that has passed since she first took to the airwaves of Japanese television.

The co-creation of producer Yoshinobu Nishizaki (a former agent for Osamu Tezuka, of *Astro Boy* and *Kimba the White Lion* fame) and cartoonist Reiji Matsumoto (well known on both sides of the ocean for *Captain Harlock, Queen of 1000 Years*, and *Galaxy Express 999*), and animated by Office Academy, Toei Doga, and Tokyo Doga, Yamato was so popular with the Japanese public that the release of the first Yamato feature film in 1977 triggered the huge animation boom that Japan still enjoys to this day.

The first Yamato feature film in 1977 triggered the huge animation boom that Japan still enjoys to this day.

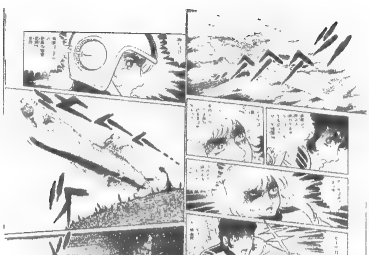
The first two Yamato TV series , *Space Cruiser Yamato* (1974-5) and *Space Cruiser Yamato 2* (1978-9), were brought to North America and underwent the scene-snipping and story editing that most Japanese animated series must suffer when they reach these shores. Under the title *Star Blazers* , the combined series began airing in 1979, and found a fiercely loyal audience despite the odd hours at which most stations chose to broadcast it.

Fan clubs sprang up, enthusiasts made their presence known at science-fiction and comic conventions, and people who had wolfed down the 52 *Star Blazers* episodes and wanted more either overcame or ignored the language barrier and found a wealth of further Yamato adventures awaiting them in Japan.

Like most Matsumoto epics, the overall Yamato story has different lines of continuity — to date, the saga has had two big finales and a third storyline that leaves the way clear for a sequel.

All three co-existing storylines start with the first series: In 2199, Earth has been well-crisped by radioactive "planet-bombs" sent by the alien Gamilas and their Leader Dessler, who intend to fry mankind and then move to Earth from their own dying planet. The scant remainder of the human race is forced to retreat to a single underground city to escape the radioactivity, but the refuge will only be safe for one year.

Just as things look generally hopeless, a message arrives from Iskandar, a planet 148,000 light-years away: Queen Starsha — a being just this side of a goodess — offers Earth a cure for the radioactivity, if they can come and pick it up. The plans for a faster-than-light-speed "Wave Motion" engine are included, and put to quick use — the hulk of the battleship Yamato is renovated into the Space Cruiser Yamato, and with the otherworldly engine and a



***Yamato** escapes the explosion of the Garuman-Gamilas planet in Akira Hio's two-volume **Yamato — The Concluding Chapter** (Sun Comics, 1983). (Note: The Japanese pages have been flopped for better reader comprehension.)*

young, elite but somewhat addled crew gracing her innards, the warping warship begins the desperate mission.

Little more than half the crew of 114 survive the journey, but Yamato manages to defeat the Gamilas and tote the radiation remover back to Earth, under the guidance of hotshot-cum-necrophiliac Deputy Captain Susumu Kodai and wily, wise old Captain Juzo Okita. Yamato makes it home with seven days to spare, and Captain Okita dies peacefully after getting his longed-for last look at the planet. (The 1977 feature film was a condensation of the series.)

The enormous success of the first *Yamato* feature was followed in August 1978 by a second movie that many still consider to be one of the finest Japanese animated films ever made — *Arrivederci Yamato*. One year after Yamato's return from the voyage to Iskandar, the ship has been retired — already outdated by Earth's newly rebuilt fleet. Kodai and the veterans of the first mission steal Yamato from drydock, and take off to investigate a garbled call for help from distant planet Telezart. There, Teresa — the spirit of universal love, in the form of a luminous, naked woman — warns Yamato that the White Comet Empire is on the warpath and begs the crew to stop it so peace in the universe can be restored.

Kodai ends up pitted against his arch-nemesis Leader Desslar, the last of the Gamilas, in a death-duel — Desslar driven to avenge his destroyed Gamilas Empire, and Kodai trying desperately to just save Yamato so she can protect Earth from the approaching White Comet Empire. Kodai's fiance Yuki Mori is mortally wounded in the showdown, and Desslar suicides in the finest science fiction-samurai tradition — he steps out an airlock and dies instantly, finding peace at last.

In quick succession, every Earth ship but Yamato is destroyed, all but 18 of Yamato's crew members are killed, and only a miracle can prevent the White Comet Empire from annihilating Earth. Captain Okita's ghost appears and tells Kodai what must be done, and as the spirits of Yamato's entire crew fill the bridge, reunited forever, Kodai kamikazes Yamato into the enemy. Earth is saved, Kodai and Yuki's marriage is sealed, and "in the year 2201, Yamato began her eternal journey."

Two months later, the *Yamato 2* TV series began serializing the same general story, although with a few twists — a romance between a now-clothed Teresa and Yamato's chief navigator Daisuke Shima was added and, by the final episode, Desslar, Kodai, Yuki, and Yamato all survived for a comparatively happy ending. The contradictions to the highly popular and emotional *Arrivederci* cost *Yamato* a number of fans, but most accepted the new continuity line.

Yamato — The New Journey, a 90-minute tele-feature that was first broadcast in July 1979 to a 30.6% share of the audience, picked up the narrative where the *Yamato 2* series left off: After Yamato and the handful of her surviving crew members are patched up, the ship is recommissioned, and a new crew of exceptionally inept cadets are recruited. Yamato sets off on a training voyage, the rookies wreak havoc and nearly wreck the ship as well, and all Kodai can do is realize how Okita must've felt back in the beginning — "Yamato isn't a kindergarten!" he groans.

Later, Yamato is abruptly pressed into an alliance with former foe Desslar — planet Iskandar and its sole inhabitants, Queen Starsha and Kodai's older brother Mamoru (who was discovered living with the Iskandarian queen back in the first series), are under attack by an advance fleet from the Dark Nebula Empire and need help fast. But even Yamato and Desslar's fleet combined can't save them, and in the end Starsha tricks Mamoru into boarding Yamato with their newborn daughter Sasha, then blows up planet Iskandar (and herself) to finally destroy the Dark Nebulan fleet. Desslar and his own fleet leave to continue their search for a new planet to rebuild the Gamilas Empire on, and Yamato returns to Earth with Mamoru and baby Sasha in tow.

One year passed in both worlds, and in 2202 (and August 1980), the film *Be Forever Yamato* began. The Dark Nebula Empire has traced Yamato to Earth and occupies the planet, planting a 10-story-tall bomb and threatening to blow away half the world unless Yamato is delivered to them. Fortunately, Chief Mechanic Shiro Sanada thought to have Yamato hidden away within the asteroid Icarus, where he, his niece Mio, and a small crew tend the ship.

Kodai and most of the main bridge crew manage to excape from Earth to Icarus, but Yuki is wounded, left behind, and taken prisoner by the Dark Nebula's hot-to-trot Second Lieutenant Arufon. The Commander of Earth

(Continued on page 91)

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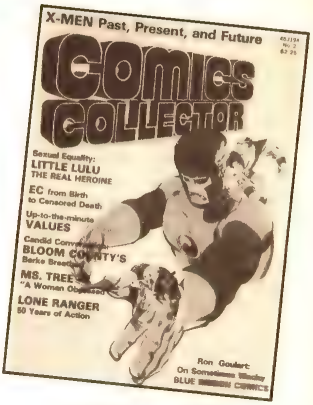

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Little Ms. Moppet

PART II

[In ***Comics Collector*** *#2 our introduction to the world of* ***Little Lulu*** *dealt with how the comic book came to be and who its principal characters were.*

Lulu began as the star of a panel cartoon created by Marjorie Henderson Buell for ***The Saturday Evening Post****. When Lulu was transferred to comic-book format, John Stanley wrote and drew her adventures for years.*

Marge had created the kids Lulu, Tubby, Alvin, Gloria, Iggy, and Willie — and the grownups Dad and Mother. Stanley defined those characters further, created more of his own, and added a network of situations from which his stories sprang.]

Little Lulu treated some themes again and again. A random 10 issues might include 10 or more stories of mean boys getting what they deserved, 10 stories told by Lulu to Alvin (sometimes moral lessons, sometimes sheer entertainment), more than five stories each concerning Tubby as a detective,

by Maggie Thompson

nasty-rich-kid Wilbur's getting paid back for a rotten act, or Lulu's solving some sort of problem. There'd be a few stories dealing just with interaction between Lulu and Tub or with Tub getting into trouble or with the problems presented by the tough West Side Gang. There'd be an occasional fantasy (say, Lulu trying to find a home for a stray ghost) mixed in with an occasional fantasy-that-turned-out-to-be-a-dream. Once in a while, there'd be a story concerning Tubby's teeth-grinding violin playing or the agonies of taking Tiny Tots' Tonic or the threats posed by the hostile truant officer Mr. McNabbem.

Intelligence and wit almost invariably triumphed over violence in the Lulu comics. Time and time again, there were stories in which some physical threat was overcome by thought and Ulysses-like craft. Brutish force was shown to be ridiculous and evil; strategy was portrayed as the admirable solution to a problem. (Intelligent response was never shown as uniquely masculine or feminine; Tubby, as well as Lulu, could be cleveron occasion.)

In addition to the occasional goody-goody tone stories sometimes took —

with obvious moral points being made — there were some inherent points, too. Commentator Rick Dey, for example, said, "When the kids *do* behave like adults, it's always to comic effect — the clubhouse is a gentle parody of male chauvinism — the Men's Club and other equally dreary institutions." He noted that, in the era in which Lulu was going strong, "the entire planet was in the grip of a mad lust for conformity, from Stalin and Beria in Russia to McCarthy and the UnAmerican Activities Committee over here, all legislating morality and rubbing the odd man out. The kids in *Little Lulu* were maybe playing scrub in a vacant lot but the real kids were dressed up in Little League baseball suits not to play ball to have fun, but to be indoctrinated in the tribal rites of wearing a silly costume and assuming the anonymous mantle of team responsibility, competing for prestige and power."

Dey pointed out that, in an era in which subservience to authority was virtually demanded, Lulu's stories repeatedly showed that authorities could be wrong, too. For a dime comic to remind children that adults had frailties was a startling thing for that day. While Lulu's mother was the rock of dependability in uncertain seas, even she was not involved with the inner workings of her daughter's life. This didn't mean that she was to be disobeyed — but it was always understood that her age had to be taken into account.

We didn't read *Little Lulu* for morals, though — nor for encouragement in our beliefs that adults were a little Out Of It. We read *Little Lulu* for *fun*. The inspired comedy of her best adventures have seldom been matched in other comics. She was in there competing with *Uncle Scrooge* for top honors in the field of the *funny* "funny book." We enjoyed the ridiculous mystery stories in which Tubby (in some incredible disguise as The Spider, master detective) solved a mystery for Lulu. (Her father was the inevitable suspect, since he had the biggest little beady eyes Tubby had ever seen in a lifetime of crime detection. Tub was almost invariably right in his diagnosis.)

Time after time, we empathetically gritted our teeth as Tubby elicited ghastly shrieks from the violin on which his mother made him practice. He had had a violin as far back as Western's special numbers, but it gradually became a major plot device in some stories. The earliest of those was in #10 in "The Musician," a solo Tubby story. Entranced by the sight of a street violinist's getting money tossed in his hat by passers-by, Tubby decided to try the job himself — "I betcha I'd make *more* money because I'm a little boy an' people would feel more sorry for me!" He took off his shoes, rubbed dirt on his face, dressed in old overalls, and set out to reap a harvest. Each time he stopped at crowded corners and began to play, though, he discovered that as soon as he began to play, people disappeared. Finally, he set up his music stand with the book of scales ("I don't know those scales by heart yet!") next to the street violinist. After one "*SCROOCH!*" from Tubby's fiddle, the man swung at Tubby with his bow, yelling, "Hey! Get out of here!!" Tubby parried with his own bow, and they were soon dueling in front of a crowd of fascinated onlookers, who threw scads of coins to them after Tubby finally scored a hit on the violinist's chest. The antagonists both scooped up money in haste (the man commenting happily, "This is more money than I earn in a *week*!"), and Tubby returned home in victory, loaded with coins.

Tubby eventually became so popular that he was given his own comic (where Lulu seldom appeared) and a new batch of characters were added (or used more often) to enliven his stories. Gloria and Wilbur were his perpetual harassers, but he also had his Aunt Martha's little boy, Chubby, to contend with. Chubby looked like a smaller version of Tubby, and their relations were not cordial. There were also Sammi and the rest of the little men from Mars in their flying saucer — but they were good friends of Tubby's and provided an exotic addition to his adventures.

It sometimes seemed that the stories that were the *most* fun were the ones that Lulu told Alvin, sometimes in response to his badgering, sometimes spurred by her own feeling of duty. The earliest ones were an assortment of parodies, satires, and sheer comedy — with the most frequent source of laughter being the contrast between the action of the story as shown in the pictures and as described in the narration. Virtually all the stories starred a "beautiful little girl" (who looked just like Lulu), though sometimes they were just stories about what had supposedly hap-

© 1958 by Marjorie Henderson Buell.

Tubby (as The Spider) prepares to spin a web to trap the unwary villain (Lulu's pop, as always). The fiendish crime being investigated is the theft of a cup from Lulu's tea set. (He eventually confessed to using it as an eyecup.)

© 1951 by Marjorie Henderson Buell.

In "Business Girl" Lulu's lemonade sells more successfully — for obvious reasons. A frog was obtained but sold for more than the lemonade would have. The boys went on to more drastic measures.

pened to her when she was much younger. (The pictures showed the "younger" Lulu as looking exactly the same as the Lulu telling the story.) One rare story (in #9) did *not* have Lulu in it; it concerned the little fluffy pink boy cloud named Gerard. (Gerard ran away from home — but that's another story.) Mostly, stories starred Lulu, even when the character involved was the ugly duckling.

Creator John Stanley really went wild in the stories-to-Alvin sequences in the early days. They were real flights of fancy at times, as in the hilarious parody of Disney's *Snow White*. It was the third of the stories-to-Alvin to appear. "On and on I ran until I fell to the ground exhausted — I was alone, and th' silence of th' forest frightened me — Th' leaves rustled, and little eyes peered at me from th' darkness — " (Each panel indicated a bit of the Disney effect of Snow White in the woods . . .)

"But then I realized they were only th' little forest animals who had come to watch over me and protect me . . . little rabbits and squirrels and — porcupines and — " At the sight of the porcupine and skunks who were rushing to her side, she leaped up and took off again. The seven dwarfs, incidentally, were the image of Alvin at his most rotten; they complained bitterly of Lulu's sleeping in their house ("What does she think this is, a turkey roost?")

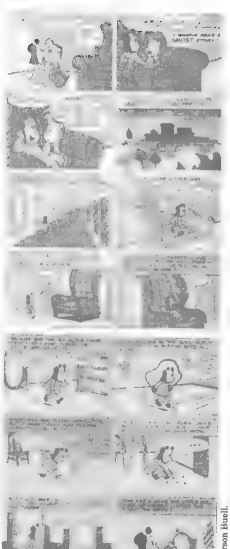
I always rather begrudged Witch Hazel's incursion into the story-telling (and even more the use of Hazel's niece, Little Itch). Hazel was introduced in #39 (September 1951) in "That Awful Witch Hazel." "Hazel is a witch who lives in the woods and grabs little kids who run away from home!" Lulu told Alvin, when he declared his decision to run away from his home — to make his fortune before he got *too* old. Lulu told Alvin of the time she ran away from home and Hazel enchanted her inside a rock. The early Hazel stories tended to be cautionary tales, designed to inspire reform or teach a lesson, as in the second story (in #45) of Hazel which was titled, bluntly enough, "That Awful Witch, Hazel, Again." After scolding Alvin for going off the sidewalk, Lulu told him, "*I* ran off the sidewalk once when *I* was a little kid, an' Hazel got me!" Hazel was evoked when Alvin was about to eat a mushroom he picked, when Alvin was about to run away from home, and so on. But she entered the stories only now and then at first.

© 1946 by Marjorie Henderson Buell.

In "At the Beach" (in the first ***Lulu*** *comic,* ***Four Color*** *#74), Lulu and Tubby set off conflicts involving innocent bystanders.*

WHEN SHE GOT CLOSER, SHE SAW THE SMOKE SIGNALS WERE RISING OUT OF A THICK, DENSE FOREST.
IT WAS AN OLD LADY STIRRING A BIG KETTLE WITH INKY BLA
SNIFF
I RAN RIGHT
HELP!

© 1968 by Marjorie Henderson Buell.



© 1951 by Marjorie Henderson Buell.

Witch Hazel stories eventually replaced the often wildly imaginative fantasies Lulu told to Alvin. Witch Hazel's niece Itch later joined the cast of characters for storytime.

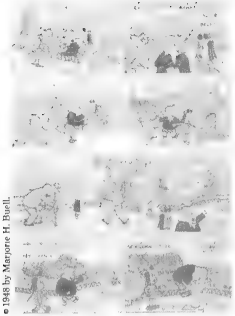
Soon, however, it was the stories *without* Hazel which were the rarities — and, eventually, Hazel's niece Itch was introduced to torment the Lulu-lookalike heroine in adventure after adventure.

I was never sure whether the witches were the favorites of the children who read the stories — or of the adults who wrote the stories. For me, the tales became incredibly routine after a time, with one or both witches harassing the poor (but beautiful) little girl, who had to pick beebleberries for a living. Perhaps the most delightful of these stories appeared in #99, in which Itch sobbed to her Aunt Hazel, "Every morning, rain or shine, [the poor little girl] came into the woods and worked her little fingers to the bone picking beebleberries for her poor widowed mother . . . and now she's *gone*!"

Indeed, the poor little girl was very ill. "Luckily, she had such a *high fever* she kept the whole house warm all by herself, and her dear mother didn't have to buy any firewood and could pay the doctor's bills with the money saved." The doctors all agreed that the little girl was sick and that the cure was that she go daily into the woods to pick beebleberries. Luckily for the little girl and her mother, ol' Witch Hazel arrived then and diagnosed the problem *correctly* — "She's sick and tired of *beebleberries! Picking* them and *eating* them!" Hazel's cure was simple — "Send her into the woods to pick *pupokknuts*!" Sure enough! "*Pokpooplnuts? Yum yummy!*" exclaimed the girl, who skipped off to the woods shouting, "Oh, I *love* to eat *pupplnokknuts* better than anything!"

And the witch stories continued.

Through all the stories in *Little Lulu*, Lulu continued almost indomitable. She never gave up trying to integrate the exclusivity of the boys' club; she never hesitated to try to solve the insoluble. The stories were rare for a day in which women were returning to the kitchen after World War II and were trying to settle things down, afraid to make waves in a world of increasing conformity. Not only did Lulu enter (and win) a model plane contest in the second issue of her



© 1948 by Marjorie H. Buell.

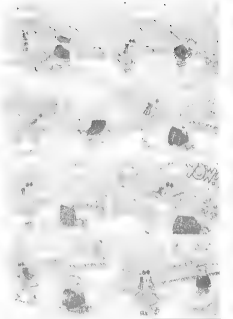
The interaction of Lulu and Tubby as they wander through a park strike the reader as true-to-life. So must they strike park attendants.

We read LITTLE LULU for fun.

own comic, but she also confronted the exclusively male club in her fourth issue, with the Junior Paratroopers Club ("fer MEN ONLY"). In that story, she formed "Lulu's Raiders" — and the boys sent Tub to spy, disguised as a girl. In the ending of that story, published more than 25 years before Rosey Grier produced his *Needlepoint for Men*, the boys all joined *Lulu's* club to do embroidery, which (said Tub) was more fun than climbing trees.

For a time (June 1950-May 1969), she had her own newspaper comic strip with the Chicago Tribune-N.Y. News Syndicate, Inc. Western Publishing Company, Inc., (which took over comic-book distribution from Dell years ago) bought all rights to the character from Marge a few years ago — at which point Marge's name was dropped from the title. Wallace I. Green (Managing Editor for Western's Periodical Division) said that Marge did continue to send comments every so often, which the company was glad to receive. Now that it had total control of the character, Western had begun a merchandising campaign of imposing proportions.

Western issued its own Little Lulu comics, books, and coloring books, as well as various activity items which included $3.50 and $5 Little Lulu or

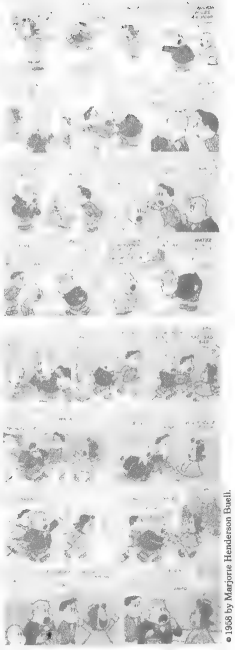


The original issues, preserved over the years, may be chipping around the edges, but the classic stories are as fresh as ever.

Tubby Dollmaker Kits (which produced 15" and 21" dolls, respectively). The Gund Manufacturing Company brought out its own ready-made Little Lulu dolls — which ranged in size from 7" to 32" tall (one of the Gund dolls made the cover of the 1973 Speigel Christmas catalog). Licensees using Lulu included more than a doll manufacturer. There were Little Lulu pots and pans, Little Lulu tea sets, Little Lulu jewelry, Little Lulu appliques, Little Lulu clothing, Little Lulu costumes, Little Lulu umbrellas, Little Lulu hassocks, Little Lulu radios, Little Lulu party items from Hallmark Cards, Inc., Little Lulu bookends, Little Lulu ceramic mugs . . .

She's earned quite a bit of money since the day she tossed banana peels into the church aisle. And, obviously, Western thought she could earn quite a bit more, even with today's child labor laws. She's been modified a bit; Tubby appears occasionally today without his bow tie and wearing (are you ready?) blue or brown slacks instead of short pants. Reprints 02do appear now and then from the Western Publishing Company — sometimes side-by-side with new stories.

It just may be that a move is afoot to bring the classic Lulu stories to a new generation of children. It would be



© 1968 by Marjorie Henderson Buell.

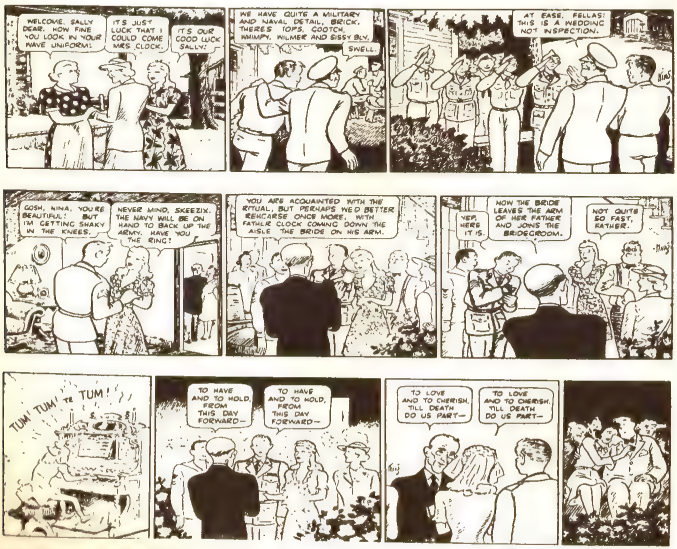
Lulu has caught the football because she has sticky bubblegum on her hand. Conflict between differing motivations continues to entertain.

grand to see all the old adventures re-released — between hard cover, this time. The original issues, preserved over the years, may be chipping around the edges, but the classic stories are as fresh as ever. My daughter and son grin their way through the stories of adventure and wild humor that I enjoyed a couple of decades ago. I hear from friends all over the country that Lulu was vital to them, as they searched for maturity in a childish world.

She lived in a fantasy world, but Lulu brought many lives to a healthy reality. Without pain. With laughter.

SIXTY-THREE AND COUNTING

GASOLINE ALLEY MARCHES ON

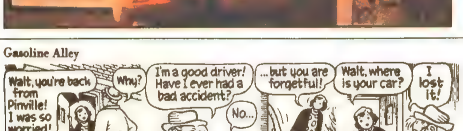

WELCOME, SALLY DEAR. HOW FINE YOU LOOK IN YOUR WAVE UNIFORM!
IT'S JUST LUCK THAT I COULD COME MRS. CLOCK.
IT'S OUR GOOD LUCK SALLY!
WE HAVE QUITE A MILITARY AND NAVAL DETAIL, BRICK. THERE'S TOPS, COOTCH, WIMPY, WILMER AND SISSY BLY.
SWELL!
AT EASE, FELLAS! THIS IS A WEDDING NOT INSPECTION.
GOSH, NINA, YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL! BUT I'M GETTING SHAKY IN THE KNEES.
NEVER MIND, SKEEZIX. THE NAVY WILL BE ON HAND TO BACK UP THE ARMY. HAVE YOU THE RING?
YOU ARE ACQUAINTED WITH THE RITUAL, BUT PERHAPS WE'D BETTER REHEARSE ONCE MORE. WITH FATHER CLOCK COMING DOWN THE AISLE THE BRIDE ON HIS ARM.
NOW THE BRIDE LEAVES THE ARM OF HER FATHER AND JOINS THE BRIDEGROOM.
YEP, HERE IT IS.
NOT QUITE SO FAST, FATHER.
TUM! TUM! TE TUM!
TO HAVE AND TO HOLD, FROM THIS DAY FORWARD—
TO HAVE AND TO HOLD, FROM THIS DAY FORWARD—
TO LOVE AND TO CHERISH, TILL DEATH DO US PART—
TO LOVE AND TO CHERISH, TILL DEATH DO US PART—

Gasoline Alley is © 1944 by The Chicago Tribune.

On June 28, 1944, Skeezix married Nina. Many of those present at the ceremony (including the groom) were in the Armed Forces. Walt and Phyllis Wallet, of course, were also there – as was Mme. Octave (Skeezix' real mother, who tried to claim him when he was four years old but failed). These panels of Frank King's strip were reprinted in ***Great Comics Syndicated by the Daily News/Chicago Tribune****, © 1972.*

Writer/artist Dick Moores took over ***Gasoline Alley*** *completely in 1960 and continues to produce it for daily and Sunday circulation.*

Gasoline Alley


Walt, you're back from Pinville! I was so worried!
Why?
I'm a good driver! Have I ever had a bad accident?
No...
...but you are forgetful!
Walt, where is your car?
I lost it!

© 1981 by Chicago Tribune-New York News Syndicate, Inc

Phyllis and Walt continue dealing with day-to-day problems in this Dick Moores strip from Dec. 1, 1981.

by Michael A. Banks

The characters sport such unlikely names as "Skeezix" and "Clovia." The situations range from family spats to a hitch-hiking bear. The setting is an anonymous little town with residents such as the cold-hearted, money-loving Uriah Pert, and the bungling jack-of-all-trades and junkman, Joel.

Gasoline Alley is something of a fixture in an ever-changing world. Almost anyone who has followed newspaper comic strips has seen the strip and gotten to know Walt Wallet, his children, grandchildren, and other characters who march across the pages of more than 190 newspapers across the country.

Started in 1919 by Frank King, *Gasoline Alley* predates the venerable *Little Orphan Annie* by five years.

That was a long time ago: In 1919, Henry Ford had only been making Model T's for a decade, Woodrow Wilson was President, and women still did not have the vote nationally. The very fact that *Gasoline Alley* is still going strong after 63 years says a lot, what with new comic strips appearing almost weekly.

Gasoline Alley began as a single-panel cartoon about auto enthusiasts gathering in an alley to discuss cars but quickly expanded to become a strip which dealt with the everyday problems of everyday people. The genesis of today's *Gasoline Alley*, with its extended family, was the advent of Skeezix, who was left on bachelor Walt Wallet's doorstep on Valentine's Day in 1921.

The appearance of a child led to Walt's marriage (reversing usual protocol) and more children. At age 18, Skeezix graduated from high school — in 1939 — and, typical of the times, jumped into a job with a newspaper. As World War II developed, the strip's focus changed to mirror the times, and Skeezix was drafted. He married his high school sweetheart, and a new generation of Wallets came along.

The strip has developed that way ever since, presenting an ever-changing reflection of the times, with families growing and problems developing much as these things occur in real life. The one anomaly of the strip, which has provided no little humor, is the slow aging of the older characters. Walt Wallet, a young man in 1919, looks no more his chronological age of 83 than Skeezix looks to be in his sixties.

The changing element of the strip — the growth of the individual characters — is perhaps one of the main reasons for the strip's popularity. As new characters are introduced, they begin immediately to grow and mature, not only with time, but with changing personalities brought on by the learning processes of coping with daily life. This continuing focus is actually the stability of *Gasoline Alley*.

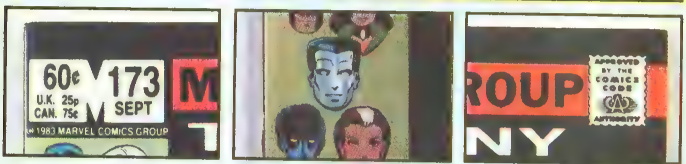
Gasoline Alley's creator left the strip in 1960. The new writer and artist was Dick Moores, who still does the strip, working from his home in eastern North Carolina. Moores considers *Gasoline Alley* a life's work and is very involved with the characters.

His readers (more than 60,000,000) get involved with the strip, too, as evidenced by the large amount of fan mail he gets. Readers tend to become involved with the characters in *Gasoline Alley*, and write to comment on such diverse topics as the break-up of Slim and Clovia and the ever-falling shoulder straps of Miss Melba's blouse. The characters are real to many readers.

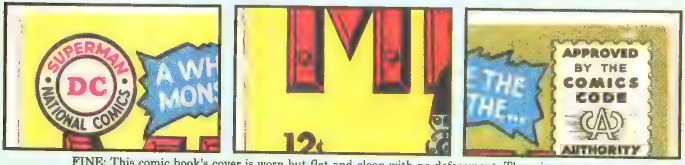
Moores, now in his early seventies, began working on comic strips in 1931. He started out with Chester Gould, the creator of *Dick Tracy*, but left five years later because, he says, "The money wasn't too good.

(Continued on page 90)

Photo Grading Guide



MINT: This is a perfect comic. Its cover has full luster, with its edges sharp and its pages like new. There are no signs of wear or aging. It is not imperfectly printed nor markedly off-center. "Mint" means just what it says.

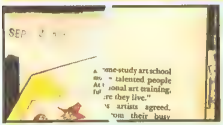


FINE: This comic book's cover is worn but flat and clean with no defacement. There is no cover writing or tape repair. Stress lines around the staples and more rounded corners are permitted. It is a good-looking issue at first glance.

GOOD: This is a complete or very worn comic book with nothing missing. Creases, minor tears, rolled spine, and cover flaking are permissable — but there is no tape or browned pages. Older Golden Age comics often come in this condition.

FAIR: This comic book may have a soiled, slightly damaged cover, badly rolled spine, cover flaking, corners gone, tears, and the like. It is an issue with multiple problems but it is intact. Tape may be present.

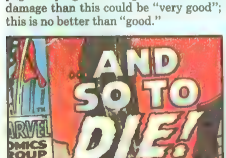
Color Guide To Defects



Stamped arrival date and ***off-center cover*** and ***off-center stapling.*** Minor defects. Some will not call it "mint"; some will.

Rolled spine. Caused by folding back each page while reading — rather than opening the comic flat. Repeated folding permanently bent the spine. *May* be corrected, but the issue is no better than "very good."

Water damage. Varies from simple page-warping to staining seen here. Less damage than this could be "very good"; this is no better than "good."



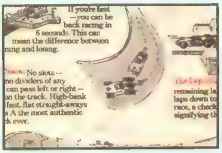
Multiple folds and wrinkles. No better than "fair" condition.

The problem of grading comics accurately is one which seems to have an easy solution. Theoretically, given a set of grading rules, determining condition of a comic book should be simple. Unfortunately, flaws vary from item to item, and it can be difficult to pin one label on a particular issue.

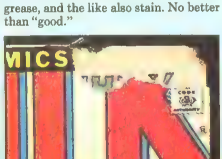
Comics Collector has introduced its own grading guide as a help to those new to judging an issue's condition. Readers are invited to use this standard, and advertisers may indicate that they use *CC* standards.

In no way is reader or advertiser bound to follow this or any other standard, but each is welcome to use it as a service which can clarify terms used in collecting.

The examples shown here represent specific defects listed in each case. The condition of the individual issue as a whole is not necessarily that of the specific defect. (For example, the copy with stamped arrival date, off-center cover, and off-center staple is *not* in mint condition aside from those defects.)

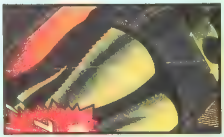


Stains. Can vary widely, depending on cause. These look like mud — but food, grease, and the like also stain. No better than "good."



Chunk missing. Actual piece missing. Couldn't be better than "fair."

Rusty staple. Caused by dampness during storage, rust stains around staples may be this minor — or may be more apparent. Couldn't be better than "very good."



Subscription crease. Comics sent by mail were folded down the middle, leaving a permanent crease. Definitely no better than "very good"; probably no better than "good."

Writing defacing cover. Marking can include filling in light areas or childish scribbling. No better than "good."

Tape. Extreme example of tape damage. Used to show *why* tape shouldn't be used on a comic book — or *any* book — for repairs. *All* tape (even so-called "magic" tape) ages badly — as does rubber cement. *Any* tape means "fair," at best.

Price Guide

Comics Collector Magazine's price guide is designed to provide information to the most recent values in the comic world. It is designed not only as a price guide but as an easy-to-use index of all the current titles. By using the abbreviations provided one can readily ascertain the leading artists involved in each issue, pertinent heroes, villains, and happenings. This format is suited to both the novice and student.

All major DC and Marvel titles are provided in their total runs, generally beginning with the mid-Fifties or Silver Age of comics, up to date. The super-hero is the main focus within the hobby and it is herein reflected. The current trends have been carefully studied and are revealed in these prices.

The prices reflect the current selling trend. Many collectors don't realize the fact that, in some regions and seasonal times, certain issues will be higher or lower than the rest of the collecting habits of the country. For instance, a certain artist might attend a convention where his work will be highly sought after and shortly thereafter the price on his art rises in that region. Economic conditions can play strong influence on prices. Areas with high unemployment will find prices dropping while other areas are rising. With the slower economic conditions, high-priced items and middle-value comics tend to drop or soften. The pristine older comic is always the exception to this. A new phenomenon has arisen in comics, this is the plethora of exciting new issues. Demand has been so great that many new issues rise in value almost immediately. Dealers' supplies diminish quickly and the values begin to climb overnight. Dealers cannot easily resupply a hot issue. This price guide reflects these new trends. No single source can provide a universally acceptable value to comics. Dealers' price lists provided a strong source, advertised buy and sell ads, auction results, and survey of comic conventions add to the compiling of the price guide.

Special mention must be given to **The Comic Book Price Guide,** by Robert M. Overstreet. This work, now in its 13th year, has been the main source of comic information. This book is a must for every collector. Doug Sulipa's **Marvel Comics Price Guide and Check List** is also recommended. Special thanks to Galaxy Comics, Norwalk, CT, Yesteryear's Collectibles, Ridgefield, CT, and Bob Sodaro for assistance in the index. Also recommended is Fantaco's **Chronicles** and the Marvel Comics indices by George Olshevsky and Tony Frutti.

THE PRICES STATED WITHIN ARE FOR NEAR-MINT COMICS. This is the most acceptable and general condition a collector desires for newer comics. The condition of comics is a must factor in comic values.

Comics collecting these days is more popular than ever with the advent of movie and television tie-ins and new titles that grow by leaps and bounds in value (such as **X-Men** and **The New Teen Titans.**) The reasons for collecting are multifold. People collect for investment (to keep the books to eventually be sold later), story, nostalgia (remember Green Lama?) or artwork and storytelling (by Frank Miller, Neal Adams, etc.) Whatever the reason, **Comics Collector** hopes you enjoy this very popular hobby in which its fandom is growing all the time.

ARTISTS ABBREVIATIONS

NA — Neal Adams
AA — Alfredo Alcala
JA — Jim Aparo
RA — Ross Andru
TA — Terry Austin
SA — Sergio Aragones
DA — Dan Adkins
JAb — Jack Abel
BA — Brent Anderson
MA — Murphy Anderson
MB — Matt Baker
CB — Carl Barks
CCB — C.C. Beck
FB — Frank Brunner
BB — Brian Bolland
RB — Rich Buckler
PB — Pat Broderick
JB — John Buscema
JBy — John Byrne
SB — Sal Buscema
SC — Sid Check
HC — Howard Chaykin
JC — Jack Cole
LBC — L.B. Cole
JCr — Johnny Craig
DC — Dave Cockrum
GC — Gene Colan
RCo — Rich Corben
EC — Ernie Colon
DD — Dick Dillin
JD — Jack Davis
MD — Mort Drucker
JDi — Jayson Disbrow
SD — Steve Ditko
GD — Gene Day
WE — Will Eisner
BE — Bill Elder
GE — George Evans
FE — Bill Everett
RE — Rus Estrada
AF — Al Feldstein
LF — Lou Fine
HF — Harold Foster
MF — Matt Fox
FF — Frank Frazetta
MG — Michael Golden
FG — Floyd Gottfredson
FGu — Fred Guardineer
KG — Keith Giffen
PG — Paul Gulacy
BGo — Butch Guice
DGr — Dan Green
DG — Dick Giordano
MGr — Mike Grell
MGu — Mike Gustovich
KGa — Kerry Gammill
RH — Russ Heath
WH — Wayne Howard
DH — Don Heck
FH — Fred Hembeck
BH — Bob Hall
CI — Carmine Infantino
GI — Graham Ingels
JJ — Jeff Jones
KJ — Klaus Janson
JKa — Jack Kamen
MK — Mike Kaluta
GK — Gil Kane
WK — Walt Kelly
ERK — E.R. Kinstler
JK — Jack Kirby
RK — Roy Krenkel
BK — Bernie Krigstein
BL — Bob Layton
JKu — Joe Kubert
JL — Jose Luis Garcia Lopez
HK — Harvey Kurtzman
RM — Russ Manning
MM — Mort Meskin
FM — Frank Miller
RM — Ruban Moreira
PM — Pete Morisi
JM — Jim Mooney
GM — Gray Morrow
VM — Val Mayerik
FMc — Frank McLaughlin
LMc — Luke McDonnell
AM — Al Milgrom
BMc — Bob McLeod
MN — Mike Nasser
DN — Don Newton
AN — Alex Nino
HN — Howard Nostrand
KN — Kevin Nowlan
JO — Joe Orlando
BO — Bob Oksner
JOy — Jerry Ordway
RP — Rudy Palais
TP — Tom Palmer
GP — George Perez
DP — Don Perlin
MP — Mike Ploog
KP — Keith Pollard
MR — Mac Raboy
AR — Alex Raymond
LR — Louis Ravelli
NR — Nestor Redondo
FR — Frank Robbins
MR — Marshall Rogers
JSn — Jim Sherman
JR — John Romita
JR2 — John Romita, Jr.
CR — P. Craig Russell
AS — Alex Schomburg
S&S — Siegel & Shuster
S&K — Simon & Kirby
BS — Barry Smith
JS — John Stanley
JSn — Jim Starlin
JSo — Jim Steranko
SJa — Joe Staton
JSe — John Severin
WS — Walt Simonson
TS — Tom Sutton
CS — Curt Swan
PS — Paul Smith
KS — Kurt Schaffenberger
JSt — Joe Sinnott
DS — Dan Spiegle
FS — Frank Springer
BSz — Bill Sienkiewicz
AT — Angelo Torres
RT — Romeo Tanghal
ATh — Alex Toth
GT — George Tuska
HT — Herb Trimpe
FT — Frank Thorne
BWa — Bill Ward
AW — Al Williamson
BW — Basil Wolverton
WW — Wally Wood
BWr — Berni Wrightson
TY — Tom Yeates
TD — Tony DeZuniga
MZ — Mike Zeck

Abbreviations
A - Appearance of
C - Cameo of
D - Death of
I - Introduction of
J - Joining of
L - Leaving of
M or W - Wedding of
N - New costume
O - Origin of
R - Revival of
V - Versus
1 - First appearance of
Rep. - Reprint
Thg - Thing
BM - Batman
WW - Wonder Woman
SpM - Spider-Man

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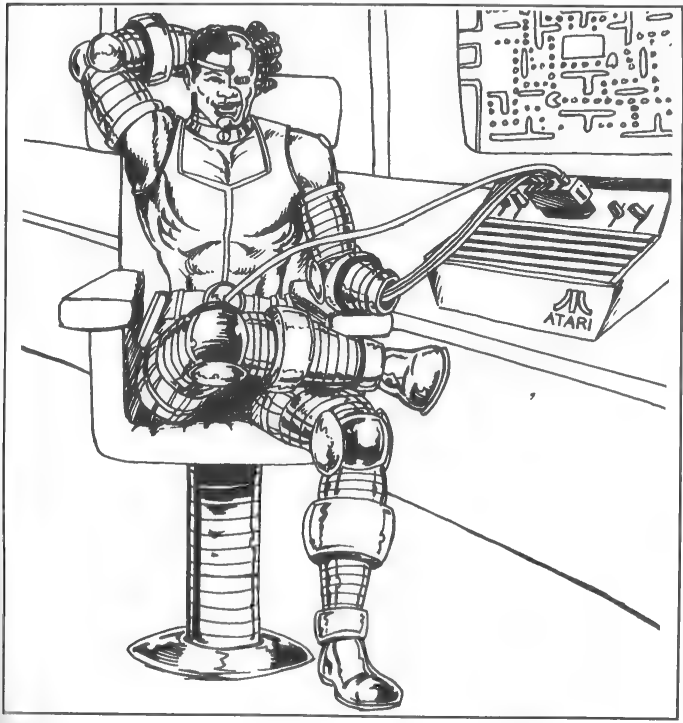

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GASOLINE ALLEY
(From page 73)

"During the time with Gould," Moores relates, "I thought up a strip called *Jim Conley, the Ex-Convict*. I didn't think the strip looked like *Dick Tracy*, but it did; having worked with Gould for five years, this looked just like his material. He wasn't real happy about it.

"But United Features Syndicate accepted it, and we changed the name to *Jim Hardy: Ace Reporter*. It was a real flop and never got off the ground."

After seven years, Moores let someone else take over the strip, and went to work for the Walt Disney organization, in the comic-strip department. The war was looming, and Moores figured that any experience with animation might gain him a billet in the Army doing the same thing.

"As it turned out," he says, "the comic-strip department at Disney was so important, what with its work on training films, that I was deferred and spent my time working on comic strips."

During his time at the Disney Studios, Moores worked on such newspaper comic-strips as *Br'er Rabbit* and *Scamp*, as well as *Mickey Mouse*.

"My first job was inking the *Mickey* strip for Floyd Gottfredson. I'll never forget the first day. I went in to work and Floyd showed me his strip that I was going to have to ink.

"I had never seen such meticulously drawn, beautiful pencil work. And here I was going to have to take my clumsy pen and go over his beautiful lines. That was about as scary a thing as I ever had to do."

Moores' work turned out well enough, though, and he stayed with the Disney Studios until 1956, eventually working on the first nationally broadcast cartoon series, *Telecomics*, in 1950.

In 1956, Frank King contacted Moores, seeking help in writing the *Gasoline Alley* strip. Moores and King had shared a studio in Chicago in the Thirties, so each was acquainted with the other's work. Moores began working with King immediately, picking up where King was stuck on a script, and continued until 1960, when he took over the artwork of the strip.

At that time, Moores began making a few changes. His artwork was, of course, different from that of King, and there was a need for some new characters.

"In 1960, the first characters that I had 'born' in the strip were the twins, Adam and Eve. The kids were growing up, and the fellow doing the Sunday strip, Bill Perry, wanted kids to work with. I don't use them any more, though."

The names of the characters come from various sources. Many of them are Biblical names. Frank King's innovation. Joel, a character developed by Moores to work with illiterate handyman Rufus, owes his name to King's penchant for Biblical names. Moores had originally named him Joe-Joe, but King held out for Joel.

Joel and Rufus provide plenty of story material for *Gasoline Alley*. Moores worked to develop Rufus beyond King's stereotype, and Joel was created to complement Rufus. Their antics involve everything from moving impossible objects with a mule and a small cart to trying to rescue someone from inside a locked safe. Invariably, they wreck something, but matters always come to a good end.

Moores keeps to a heavy schedule, writing and drawing six daily strips and one Sunday strip each week. Perry, the cartoonist doing the Sunday strip, retired in 1975, and Moores was forced to take it over.

"I had a fairly easy life until then," Moores says. "I didn't want the Sunday page, and I told my boss so. He said that he would try to get someone else to do it, since it didn't tie in with my daily pages.

"So time passed, and deadlines were approaching. Someone was going to have to do the strip, so finally I just drew a page and sent it in.

"I got stuck with it," he says with a chuckle.

It is easy to see that Moores enjoys his work, though. He speaks of his fan mail and a continuing correspondence with one fan for more than 12 years. His studio is decorated with some of his earlier comic strips, and those of other comic artists, and one corner of his home displays the many awards he has received for his work.

He speaks proudly of *Gasoline Alley*'s being the oldest "continuity strip" in existence, and his work has been praised by many younger cartoonists, including Garry Trudeau, creator of the popular *Doonesbury* strip.

Among the many awards Moores has received are the Reuben, an award presented by the National Cartoonists Society for Outstanding Cartoonist of the Year (1974), and the Inkpot Award for Achievement in the Comic Arts from the San Diego Comic Convention. He has also received a Jules Verne Award for Lifetime Achievement and was twice recipient of the National Cartoonists Society's Award for Best Story Strip.

Looking ahead, Moores sees no drastic changes for *Gasoline Alley*. He is happy with his approach to chronicling the adventures of the strip's family.

"What I try to do is write stories about people. There has to be empathy; there has to be something going that touches people — something that people can say has happened to them or would like to have happen to them.

"Violence doesn't work. Trouble, yes, but no violence. The most violent thing that happens is Pert losing his temper.

"The main thing that I do with *Gasoline Alley* that nobody else does is to move the story along and bring out the characters through the stories.

"At the end of each story, I try to have some sort of 'twist.' I feel that you have to have some sort of twist, not really a joke, but something different, a funny gag. That's the main difference between *Gasoline Alley* and the adventure type strips. Sometimes, though, it's harder for me to get that twist than any other part of a story."

Even though some of his characters are exaggerated, like Rufus and Pert, Moores tries to view them as real people.

"I really feel that they have the qualities of real people, and I hope they come across that way. I just think of them as real. If they start doing something that people wouldn't do, I just can't put it down on paper."

The "realness" of the characters permits Moores to work from a situation, letting the story develop as he writes it.

"I don't like to plan a story ahead," he explains. "I start with a situation and then try to think up three or four gags to go with the situation. Usually, I can think of five or six more as I go along.

"A story will go more or less as long as I can keep it interesting. If it starts to drag, I go on to something else. Sometimes, as with little Gretchen, there is a wealth of material.

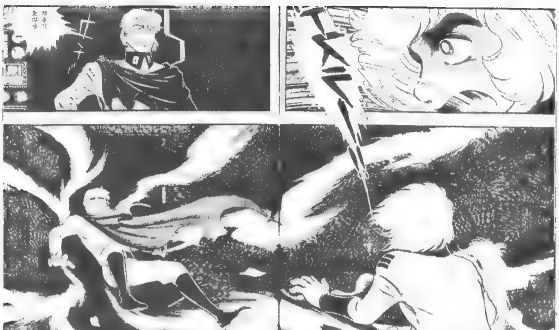
"With Gretchen not talking, I continued to find different situations to maintain interest. Somehow, I never bogged down. The interest kept building, and I kept getting more and more letters on Gretchen.

"My reaction from letters is about four months late, though. I do get reactions from my wife and friends, though," Moores says, in explaining how reader reaction affects the strip.

"I don't ask the people around me if they like it; I just show it to them, and I can tell."

The time Moores spends on the day's strip can be as little as three or four hours, or as much as eight, depending upon how well his ideas are developing.

Moores' approach to creating stories and developing characters, along with the familiarity of *Gasoline Alley*, probably will keep the strip going for many more years. The characters may not vary, but their problems and methods of dealing with problems will, reflecting American life. This element of change, framed by familiarity, has kept the strip alive for 63 years. It is good for many more.



These panels are taken from Akira Hio's three-volume adaptation of ***Arrivederci Yamato*** *(Sun Comics, 1978). It shows a traditional SF-samurai way to go. (Translation:* ***Desslar:*** *"I wish you success!!"* ***Kodai:*** *"Desslar!!") (Note: The Japanese pages have been flopped for better reader comprehension.)*

YAMATO

(From page 63)

Defense escapes captivity when Mamoru kills himself (blowing up an impressive pile of Dark Nebbies in the process), contacts Icarus, and dispatches Yamato to the Dark Nebula Empire's homeworld for a counter-attack.

Much of the next two hours is spent with Yuki turning down perpetual proposals from Arufon, and Kodai trying to ignore Mio's dewy-eyed attentions — especially when Mio turns out to actually be his own niece Sasha, grown to physical maturity in one year - an Iskandarian trait. After a tense showdown between Yuki and Arufon, the bomb is defused, and Yamato finally is able to destroy the Dark Nebulans' automated planet, but at the cost of Sasha's life. Sasha is reunited with her parents Mamoru and Starsha, and Yamato returns to Earth. Mercifully, the end credits roll before Kodai and Yuki start gilling each other on what has gone on during their separation . . .

The third Yamato TV series — entitled, aptly enough, *Space Cruiser Yamato III* — had originally been planned as a 52-episode epic, but somebody changed his or her mind early in production, and the series was squashed to only 25 episodes when it hit the Japanese airwaves beginning in October 1980.

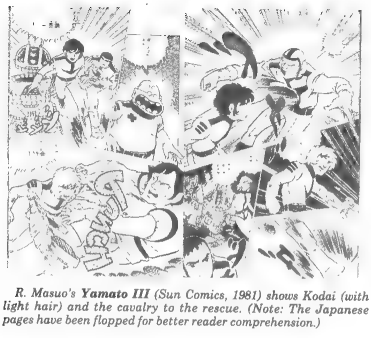
What survived of the story is this: In the year 2205, Desslar has successfully rebuilt his realm into the Garuman-Gamilas Empire and is now at war with the Bolar Commonwealth. During one of their battles, a proton missile is accidently fired into our Sun, enlarging it until Earth is in danger of being fried in one year (sound familiar?). After taking on still more clumsy cadet crewmen, Yamato sets off to try to find a new planet to which mankind can migrate. (She isn't alone in her quest — space battleships like Germany's Bismarck, Britain's Prince of Wales, and the U.S.'s Arizona are searching in other directions. Not surprisingly, the Arizona is found by Yamato later, demolished quite thoroughly . . .)

Yamato becomes entangled in the war situation and is captured and mistakenly given to Leader Desslar for a birthday present. Suitably outraged, Desslar helps Yamato try to find a planet, but all they find is Queen Luda. Yamato returns her to her home planet Shalbart, and she turns out to be the incarnation of the goddess Mother Shalbart. She gives them the Hydro Cosmogen, and, as Desslar defeats the Bolar in the decisive battle, Yamato fires the cosmic cure-all into the Sun just in time, saving Earth yet again.

After so many years, the "Dreaded horrors! Something terrible is going to happen to Earth, and only Yamato can save us!" plot was wearing thin, and other animated series had long since become more popular with the Japanese public. The decision was made to retire Yamato, and the send-off was the March 1983 film *Space Cruiser Yamato — The Concluding Chapter* (also billed by the Japanese in English as *Final Yamato*).

After so many years, the "Dreaded horrors! Something terrible is going to happen to Earth, and only Yamato can save us!" plot was wearing thin.

Another alternate ending to the saga, creating yet another line of continuity as *Arrivederci* had, it takes place in 2203 (following *Be Forever*) and contradicts the entire *Yamato III* series. Another galaxy has warped over the top of our own, causing all sorts of messy phenomena in space. Yamato is sent to investigate, finds the wrecked remains of the Garuman-Gamilas planet, and Desslar is thought to be dead. Later in her wanderings, Yamato comes across the planet Deingil, which is being drowned by a vast column of water from a huge water-planet called Aquarius that is orbiting past it.



R. Masuo's ***Yamato III*** *(Sun Comics, 1981) shows Kodai (with light hair) and the cavalry to the rescue. (Note: The Japanese pages have been flopped for better reader comprehension.)*

Kodai tries to rescue some of the planet's people, but only one small boy can be saved, and a dozen of Yamato's crewmen are killed in the fiasco. Yamato is then attacked by the Deingilan fleet, and limps back to Earth with two-thirds of her crew dead. Planet Aquarius is headed towards Earth, and the Deingilan survivors plan to take Earth for themselves after mankind is drowned.

As usual, after the battles with the villains, Yamato is the only Earth ship left, but with so many deaths on his conscience Kodai resigns the captaincy. A quick search for a new captain turns up old Juzo Okita, who is miraculously brought back to life after he'd died three years earlier, surprise! Desslar, too, appears at an opportune time to help Yamato defeat the Deingilans, and Earth is saved from the waters of Aquarius — the deadly column of water is dispersed when Yamato, with only Okita aboard, blows herself up. The bits of space battleship sink into the resulting ocean in space, and on Earth, Kodai and Yuki are finally married to end the epic.

In Japan, a series or movie will rarely be animated unless it can be merchandized to the fullest possible extent — a practice that provides the animation industry with a constant source of income to keep building on, while keeping fans satisfied — and *Yamato* was no exception. Millions of dollars' worth of models, posters, toys, candy, clothing, record albums and singles, board-and tactical games — you name it — featuring the Space Cruiser and her crew have been sold, and that's not including *Star Blazers* marketing in countries other than Japan! Currently there is none in North America, but more and more in recent years, various dealers have imported the Japanese merchandise on their own to sell to collectors and fans on this side of the ocean. And some of the most notable *Yamato* items available — the dozens of Japanese-language comics and pictorial reference books on the saga — are now finding their way to these shores.

At about the same time the first *Yamato* series was beginning its run on television, Reiji Matsumoto's comic-book version of the story was being serialized in a weekly manga magazine. "*Manga*" is the Japanese word for "comics," and millions of copies of the various manga magazines sell each week. Like most of the more popular serials, *Yamato* was collected and reprinted in black-and-white paperback form, taking up three volumes and nearly 650 pages.

The first book is Matsumoto's rendition of the first series' story, including appearances by his space pirate Captain Harlock (who had originally been planned to figure prominently in the animated series as the alter-ego of Mamoru Kodai but disappeared in the final draft of the storyline). The other two are an as-yet-uncompleted mixture of *Arrivederci* and *Yamato*, along with an original tale of Leader Desslar, his daughter Jura, and her mother Mera. The three-book set was published as part of the "Sunday Comics" manga book line by Akita Shoten and may stay in print forever. Since its first appearance in 1975, Vol. 1 has been reprinted more than 60 times.

While many Japanese animated series get their start as popular manga serials, the Yamato movies and serials pulled a switch by being the inspiration for manga books. Published by Asahi Sonorama in its "Sun Comics" paperback line, the 14-volume adaptation of the Yamato saga spans 2726 pages and covers everything except *Yamato 2*. *Space Cruiser Yamato* (three volumes), *Arrivederci Yamato* (three volumes), *Yamato — New Journey* (two volumes), *Be Forever Yamato* (two volumes), and *Yamato — The Concluding Chapter* (aka *Final Yamato*; two volumes) were all drawn by Akira Hio, a manga-man also famed for his mechanical designs in the animated *Toward the Terra* and live-action *Message from Space* movies.

While many Japanese animated series get their start as popular manga serials, the Yamato movies and serials pulled a switch by being the inspiration for manga books.

Yamato III (two volumes) was handled by R. Masuo and bore little resemblance to the original series. On the other hand, Hio's manga often followed the actual animation scripts line for line (with the exception of *Space Cruiser Yamato*, which was scripted by Keisuke Fuhikawa) and even corrected technical mistakes that had marred the original animated versions at times. Like the Sunday Comics and many other lines of manga paperback books, the Sun Comics list for 380 yen each.

In Japan, animation-related manga books face stiff competition from the first cousin of the photo-novel, anime

comics. (*Anime* is the Japanese word for "animation.") Instead of drawings, the panels of these soft-cover comics are full-color animation stills, with speech balloons and sound effects superimposed. Production of anime comics for movies has really taken off in the last three years, and nowadays films like *Cagliostro Castle*, *Crusher Joe*, and *Mobile Suit Gundam* are covered in four or five volumes each, allowing spectacular graphics and detail.

Sadly, the three sets of anime comics done to date for *Yamato* films were published before all of this progress had been made, but they're still the next best thing to owning your own copies of the movies. Two-volume anime comic sets for the *Space Cruiser Yamato* feature, *Arrivederci Yamato*, and *Be Forever Yamato* were published by Akita Shoten's "Champion Graphics" line and list for 750 yen per book.

Yamato film stills, character and mechanical design sheets, fold-out posters, and theme song sheet music, as well as story details and all kinds of data and information, can be found in the flood of magazine-sized soft-cover books produced for anime fans in Japan. Most animated shows and movies have at least on book of this type dedicated to them, and *Yamato* has a whole cascade of them to its credit.

One of the latest entrants in the Yamato book bonanza, Shogakukan, has put out two of the nicer books available as part if its "This Is Animation — The Select" series: #2, an overview of Yamato up until *Final Yamato*, and #4, which deals just with *Final*. Both books have sections of original paintings and analyses of Gamilas history and battle strategies, along with parody cartoons and beautiful color pages, and list for 780 yen each.

Shueisha's "Roadshow Special Editions" have been done for each of the *Yamato* features, although the *Final Yamato* issue is apparently the only one still in print. In addition to glossy color pages of stills, it has no fewer than three fold-out posters and the movie's shooting script and lists at 590 yen.

The most widely distributed of all the books, both in Japan and among North American buffs, seem to be Tokuma Shoten's "Roman Albums." This long-running series of books (with 57 volumes published to date) all began with the Roman Album #1 *Space Cruiser Yamato* — a scrawny little 88-pager, mostly monochrome but with a few color illustrations and a fold-out poster of Starsha by Matsumoto as its saving grace — which had nowhere to go but up. And up they went . . . #11 *Arrivederci Yamato*, #31 *Yamato 2*, #36 *Be Forever Yamato*, and #43 *Yamato III*, all 680 yen apiece, are progressively bigger and better, as is #56 *Final Yamato* (890 yen). All have about 120 pages and a good mixture of color stills, design sheets, and overall information.

But even they pale next to Roman Albums #53 and 54, the two massive *Yamato Perfect Manuals* — perhaps the finest Yamato books available today. With coverage up through the *Yamato 2* series in *Perfect Manual 1* (212 pages, 1200 yen) and *New Journey, Be Forever*, and *Yamato III* in *Perfect Manual II* (244 pages, 1300 yen), this pair covers nearly every imaginable detail, from pre-production story-stumblings to the design for the dreaded Yamato toilet. The only bad thing about these books is that their publication put every *Yamato* Roman Album but #56 *Final Yamato* out of print. Fortunately, there seems to be a large stock of them left all over Japan, so the older *Yamato* Roman Albums should still be available for a while.

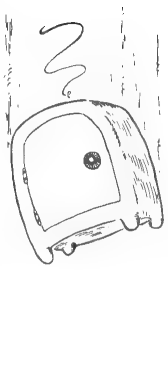
Of course, most of these books read from right to left, and *all* of them are written in Japanese (usually with a few English headings tossed in for style). But for those who don't relish the idea of becoming Japanese-to-English dictionary jockeys, at least the pictures and stills are in a language we all can understand.

All of the *Yamato* books mentioned here (and many, many more) have made it to North America and right now are being sold by specialty dealers and Japanese book stores, some of whom will special-order the books for customers. Expect to pay at least 1¢-per-1 yen for books, what with import duty and mark-up heaped on them.

Right now, *Space Cruiser Yamato* is on the threshold of another feat to add to its decade of distinction. This October, the first English-language Japanese anime comics — a three-book set detailing the first *Yamato* feature film, under the title *Star Blazers* — will be distributed by Books Nippan, the North American branch of Nippon Shuppan Hanbai. The set is tentatively priced at $12.50 a volume, and can be ordered through Books Nippan:

Books Nippan
ATTN: Yuji Hiramatsu
532 West 6th St.
Los Angeles, Calif. 90014

The books are being produced by West Cape Corporation, the Japanese company that currently owns the rights to the *Yamato* feature films. If these first English-language anime comics are successful, that could be just the encouragement needed to bring more translated Japanese animation and comics to North America . . . And Space Cruiser Yamato will have begun another mission!



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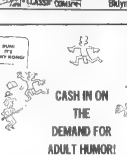

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